00043230

Digitized with financial assistance from

on 10 July, 2018

BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
Royal Asiatic Society.
CLASS

BELL's

BRITISH THEATRE.

VOL. X.

Mary Anne Nash 1800

BELL's

BRITISH THEATRE.

CONSISTING OF

43230

THE MOST ESTEEMED

ENGLISH PLAYS.

VOL. X.

CONTAINING

BEAUX STRATAGEM, ... BY FARQUHAR.
GAMESTER, ... — MOORE.
DOUBLE GALLANT, ... — CIBBER.
THEODOSIUS, ... — LEE.

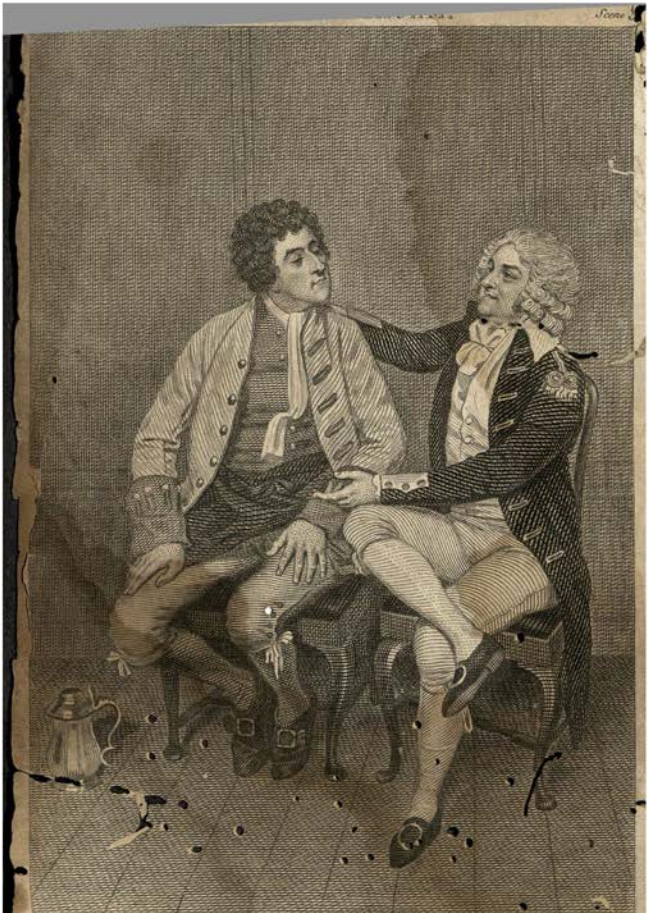
LIVERPOOL LIBRARY

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR, AND UNDER THE DIRECTION OF,
GEORGE CAWTHORN, BRITISH LIBRARY, STRAND.

1797.

00043230



Painted with permission from life by De Wilde. Audinet f.

THE Rt. HON. THE EARL of BARRYMORE & CAPTAIN WATHEN

as SCRUB, & ARCHER.

Archer. But where are the Ladies, are they?

BEAUX STRATAGEM

Mrs Sul. Arrest, Thieves murder!

Scrub. Thieves, Rebels, murder, popery!

Wale p.inv.t

Pittlo fc.

London. Printed for J. Bell, British Library, Strand. Aug.t 1791.

THE

BEAUX STRATAGEM.

A

COMEDY.

By GEO. FARQUHAR.

ADAPTED FOR

THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRES-ROYAL,

DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,

By Permission of the Managers.

"The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."

LONDON:

Printed for the Proprietors, under the Direction of

JOHN BELL, British Library, STRAND,

Bookseller to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

M DCC XCII.

GEORGE FARQUHAR.

THIS gentleman offers to us a view, over which the lover of man will weep with sincere commiseration.—A view of splendid talents and gentlemanly manners, labouring with disorder and distress through life, though happily not labouring long—for perhaps mental misery hastened his death before he could complete his 30th year.

THERE are beginning traits of character which anticipate the course of life, and from such a commencement as profaneness, little short of profligacy could be expected to follow. For impiety he was expelled the college of Dublin, *tanquam pestilentia hujus societatis*. His resource upon this circumstance was to seek the receptacle of the greater part of our indiscreet youth; and he accordingly attempted the profession of an actor.—He was never, it is said, free from that timidity which so destroys all effort, and the stage would perhaps never have seen him excellent—but an accident drove him from the profession soon—

As he was personating *Guyomar* in DRYDEN's Indian Emperor, he had to kill *Vasquez*, one of the Spanish generals, an act which he had very nearly performed—for taking by mistake a sword up instead of a foil, he wounded his brother tragedian very dangerously.——This circumstance upon Mr. FARQUHAR operated so strongly that he left the stage as an actor.

HE was fortunate enough then to secure the patronage of the Earl of ORRERY, and that nobleman gave him a lieutenant's commission in his own regiment, then in Ireland.—It was at his solicitation also Mr. FARQUHAR began to write those Comedies, which have established for him a reputation not likely to perish.

WHAT remains it is painful to tell:—He imprudently married—had children too many for his means to maintain—he died in indigence, and left them to the charitable attention of a friend.—That friend was WILKS the comedian; and to his honour be it mentioned, what was then enjoined by a dying friend he punctually performed. ——FARQUHAR died in 1707.

The following is a list of his Comedies:

Love in a Bottle — —	1699	*Stage Coach* — —	1705
Constant Couple — —	1700	*Recruiting Officer* —	1705
Sir Harry Wildair —	1701	*Twin Rivals* — —	1706
Inconstant — — —	1702	*Beaux Stratagem* —	1707

THE BEAUX STRATAGEM.

THIS Comedy is every way, but *morally*, perfect.—Virtue can derive little aid or encouragement from the scenes of FARQUHAR. They, however, who possess sufficient discrimination to separate what is good from the licentious impress of FARQUHAR's seal, may see his Plays with advantage.

THE Comedy before us is a pleasing, various assemblage of characters truly comic, and situations irresistibly diverting.—When it is considered relative to its wit, humour, and the correct knowledge of life displayed throughout, the Reader shall be told that it was written in six weeks, amid the inconveniencies of poverty, and during that illness which brought its author to his grave.

PROLOGUE.

WHEN strife disturbs, or sloth corrupts an age,
Keen satire is the business of the stage.
When the Plain Dealer writ, he lash'd those crimes
Which then infested most——the modish times.
But now when faction sleeps, and sloth is fled,
And all our youth in active fields are bred;
When thro' Great Britain's fair extensive round,
The trumps of Fame the notes of Union sound;
When Anna's sceptre points the laws their course,
And her example gives her precepts force;
There scarce is room for satire; all our lays
Must be, or songs of triumph, or of praise.
But as in grounds best cultivated, tares
And poppies rise among the golden ears;
Our product so, fit for the field or school,
Must mix with Nature's favourite plant——a fool,
A weed that has to twenty summers ran,
Shoots up in stalk, and vegetates to man.
Simpling our author goes from field to field,
And culls such fools as may diversion yield.
And, thanks to nature, there's no want of those;
For rain or shine the thriving coxcomb grows.
Follies to-night we shew ne'er lash'd before,
Yet such as nature shews you ev'ry hour:
Nor can the picture give a just offence,
For fools are made for jests to men of sense.

Dramatis Personae.

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

AIMWELL, ARCHER,	*Two Gentlemen of broken Fortunes*	Mr. Barrymore. Mr. Wroughton.
SULLEN, *a Country Blockhead*		Mr. Phillimore.
SIR C. FREEMAN, *a Gentleman from* London		Mr. Haymes.
FOIGARD, *a French Priest*		Mr. Moody.
GIBBET, *a Highwayman*		Mr. Suet.
HOUNSLOW, BAGSHOT,	*His Companions*	Mr. Alfred. Mr. Webb.
BONIFACE, *Landlord of the Inn*		Mr. Aickin.
SCRUB, *Servant to Mr.* Sullen		Mr. Dodd.

Women.

LADY BOUNTIFUL, *an old civil Country Gentlewoman, that cures all Distempers*	Mrs. Hopkins.
DORINDA, *Lady* Bountiful's *Daughter*	Mrs. Kemble.
Mrs. SULLEN, *her Daughter-in-law*	Miss Henrey.
GIPSEY	Miss Tidswell.
CHERRY	Miss Williams.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

AIMWELL, ARCHER,	*Two Gentlemen of broken Fortunes*	Mr. Farren. Mr. Lewis.
SULLEN, *a Country Blockhead*		Mr. Davies.
SIR C. FREEMAN, *a Gentleman from* London		Mr. Evat.
FOIGARD, *a French Priest*		Mr. Johnstone.
GIBBET, *a Highwayman*		Mr. Cubit.
HOUNSLOW, BAGSHOT,	*His Companions*	Mr. Rock. Mr. Milburne.
BONIFACE, *Landlord of the Inn*		Mr. Powell.
SCRUB, *Servant to Mr.* Sullen		Mr. Quick.

Women.

LADY BOUNTIFUL, *an old civil Country Gentlewoman that cures all Distempers*	Mrs. Platt.
DORINDA, *Lady* Bountiful's *Daughter*	Mrs. Mountain.
Mrs. SULLEN, *her Daughter-in-law*	Mrs. Pope.
GIPSEY	Miss Steward.
CHERRY	Mrs. Martyr.

SCENE, Litchfield.

THE

BEAUX STRATAGEM.

ACT I. SCENE I.

An Inn. *Enter* BONIFACE *running.*

[*Bar-bell rings.*

Boniface.

CHAMBERLAIN, maid, Cherry, daughter Cherry! All asleep, all dead?

Enter CHERRY, *running.*

Cher. Here, here. Why, d'ye bawl so, father? Dy'e think we have no ears?

Bon. You deserve to have none, you young minx—the company of the Warrington coach has stood in the hall this hour, and nobody to shew them to their chambers.

Cher. And let 'em wait, father; there's neither red-coat in the coach, nor footman behind it.

Bon. But they threaten to go to another inn to-night

Cher. That they dare not, for fear the coachman shou'd overturn them to-morrow [*Ringing.*] Coming, coming: here's the London coach arriv'd.

Enter several people with trunks, band-boxes, with other luggage, and cross the stage.

Bon. Welcome, ladies.

Cher. Very welcome, gentlemen.——Chamberlain, shew the Lion and the Rose.

[*Exit with the Company.*

Enter AIMWELL *in a riding habit,* ARCHER *as footman, carrying a portmanteau.*

Bon. This way, this way, gentlemen.

Aim. Set down the things; go to the stable, and see my horses well rubb'd. 21

Arch. I shall, sir.

Aim. You're my landlord, I suppose?

Bon. Yes, sir, I'm old Will Boniface, pretty well known upon this road, as the saying is.

Aim. O, Mr. Boniface, your servant.

Bon. O, Sir——What will your honour please to drink, as the saying is?

Aim. I have heard your town of Litchfield much fam'd for ale: I think I'll taste that.

Bon. Sir, I have now in my cellar ten tun of the best ale in Staffordshire: 'tis smooth as oil, sweet as milk, clear as amber, and strong as brandy, and will be just fourteen years old the fifth day of next March, old style.

Aim. You're very exact, I find, in the age of your ale.

Bon. As punctual, sir, as I am in the age of my children: I'll shew you such ale.——Here, tapster, broach number 1706, as the saying is.——Sir, you shall taste my anno domini——I have liv'd in Litchfield, man and boy, above eight-and-fifty years, and, I believe, have not consumed eight-and-fifty ounces of meat.

Aim. At a meal, you mean, if one may guess your sense by your bulk.

Bon. Not in my life, sir: I have fed purely upon ale: I have eat my ale, drank my ale, and I always sleep upon ale.

Enter TAPSTER *with a tankard.*

Now, sir, you shall see [*filling it out.*] Your worship's health: Ha! delicious, delicious——fancy it Burgundy, only fancy it, and 'tis worth ten shillings a quart.

Aim. [*drinks.*] 'Tis confounded strong.

Bon. Strong! It must be so, or how wou'd we be strong that drink it?

Aim. And have you lived so long upon this ale, landlord.

Bon. Eight-and-fifty years, upon my credit, sir; but it kill'd my wife, poor woman! as the saying is.

Aim. How came that to pass?

Bon. I don't know how, sir; she would not let the ale take its natural course, sir; she was for qualify-

ing it every now and then with a dram, as the saying is; and an honest gentleman that came this way from Ireland, made her a present of a dozen bottles of usquebaugh——but the poor woman was never well after; but, however, I was obliged to the gentleman, you know.

Aim. Why, was it the usquebaugh that killed her?

Bon. My lady Bountiful said so——she, good lady, did what could be done; she cur'd her of three tympanies, but the fourth carried her off; but she's happy, and I am contented, as the saying is.

Aim. Who's that lady Bountiful, you mentioned?

Bon. Ods my life, sir, we'll drink her health. [*drinks.*] My lady Bountiful is one of the best of women: her last husband, Sir Charles Bountiful, left her worth a thousand pounds a year; and I believe, she lays out one half on't in charitable uses for the good of her neighbours; she cures rheumatisms, ruptures, and broken shins in men: "green sickness, obstruc-"tions, and fits of the mother in women;" the king's evil, chin-cough, and chilblains in children: in short, she has cured more people in and about Litchfield within ten years, than the doctors have kill'd in twenty, and that's a bold word.

Aim. Has the lady been any other way useful in her generation?

Bon. Yes, sir, she has a daughter, by Sir Charles, the finest woman in all our county; and the greatest fortune; she has a son too, by her first husband, 'squire Sullen, who married a fine lady from London

t'other day; if you please, sir, we'll drink his health.

Aim. What sort of a man is he?

Bon. Why, sir, the man's well enough; says little, thinks less, and does—nothing at all, faith; but he's a man of great estate, and values nobody.

Aim. A sportsman, I suppose?

Bon. Yes, sir, he's a man of pleasure: he plays at whist, and smoaks his pipe eight-and-forty hours together sometimes.

Aim. A fine sportsman, truly! and marry'd you say?

Bon. Ay, and to a curious woman, sir.—But he's a—He wants it here, sir. [*Pointing to his forehead.*

Aim. He has it there, you mean.

Bon. That's none of my business, he's my landlord, and so a man, you know, would not——But I cod, he's no better than——sir, my humble service to you. [*Drinks.*] Tho' I value not a farthing what he can do to me; I pay him his rent at quarter-day; I have a good running trade; I have but one daughter, and I can give her—But no matter for that.

Aim. You're very happy, Mr. Boniface; pray, what other company have you in town?

Bon. A power of fine ladies; and then we have the French officers.

Aim. O that's right, you have a good many of those gentlemen: pray, how do you like their company?

Bon. So well, as the saying is, that I could wish we had as many more of 'em: they're full of money, and pay double for every thing they have; they know, sir, that we paid good round taxes for the

taking of them, and so they are willing to reimburse us a little: one of 'em lodges in my house.

Enter ARCHER.

Arch. Landlord, there are some French gentlemen below that ask for you.

Bon. I'll wait on 'em——Does your master stay long in town, as the saying is? [*To* Archer.

Arch. I can't tell, as the saying is.

Bon. Come from London?

Arch. No.

Bon. Going to London, may hap.

Arch. No.

Bon. An odd fellow this! [*Bar-bell rings.*] I beg your worship's pardon, I'll wait on you in half a minute. [*Exit.*

Aim. The course is clear, I see——Now, my dear Archer, welcome to Litchfield.

Arch. I thank thee, my dear brother in iniquity.

Aim. Iniquity! pr'ythee leave canting; you need not change your stile with your dress.

Arch. Don't mistake me, Aimwell, for 'tis still my maxim, that there's no scandal like rags, nor any crime so shameful as poverty. Men must not be poor; idleness is the root of all evil; the world's wide enough, let 'em bustle: fortune has taken the weak under her protection, but men of sense are left to their industry.

Aim. Upon which topic we proceed, and, I think, luckily hitherto. Would not any man swear how

that I am a man of quality, and you my servant, when, if our intrinsic value were known.——

Arch. Come, come, we are the men of intrinsic value, who can strike our fortunes out of ourselves, whose worth is independent of accidents in life, or revolutions in government: we have heads to get money, and hearts to spend it.

Aim. As to our hearts, I grant ye they are as willing tits as any within twenty degrees; but I can have no great opinion of our heads from the service they have done us hitherto, unless it be that they brought us from London hither to Litchfield, made me a lord, and you my servant.

Arch, That's more than you could expect already. —But what money have we left!

Aim. But two hundred pounds.

Arch. And our horses, cloaths, rings, &c. Why, we have very good fortunes now for moderate people: and let me tell you, that this two hundred pounds, with the experience that we are now masters of, is a better estate than the ten thousand we have spent— our friends, indeed, began to suspect that our pockets were low; but we came off with flying colours, shewed no signs of want either in word or deed.

Aim. Ay, and our going to Brussels was a good pretence enough for our sudden disappearing; and, I warrant you, our friends imagine that we are gone a volunteering.

Arch. Why 'faith if this project fails, it must e'en come to that. I am for venturing one of the hun-

dreds, if you will, upon this knight errantry; but in case it should fail, we'll reserve the other to carry us to some counterscap, where we may die as we liv'd, in a blaze.

Aim. With all my heart; and we have liv'd justly, Archer; we can't say that we have spent our fortunes, but that we have enjoy'd 'em.

Arch. Right; so much pleasure for so much money; we have had our penny-worths; and had I millions I would go to the same market again. O London, London! Well, we have had our share, and let us be thankful: past pleasures, for ought I know, are best, such as we are sure of: those to come may disappoint us. But you command for the day, and so I submit.—At Nottingham, you know, I am to be master.

Aim. And at Lincoln I again.

Arch. Then, at Norwich I mount, which, I think, shall be our last stage? for if we fail there, we'll embark for Holland, bid adieu to Venus, and welcome Mars.

Aim. A match! [*Enter* Boniface.] Mum.

Bon. What will your worship please to have for supper?

Aim. What have you got?

Bon. Sir, we have a delicate piece of beef in the pot, and a pig at the fire.

Aim. Good supper-meat, I must confess——I can't eat beef, landlord.

Arch. And I hate pig.

Aim. Hold your prating, sirrah! Do you know who you are? [*Aside.*

Bon. Please to bespeak something else; I have every thing in the house.

Aim. Have you any veal?

Bon. Veal! sir, we had a delicate loin of veal on Wednesday last.

Aim. Have you got any fish, or wild-fowl?

Bon. As for fish, truly, sir, we are an inland town, and indifferently provided with fish, that's the truth on't; but then for wild-fowl!——we have a delicate couple of rabbits.

Aim. Get me the rabbits fricasseed.

Bon. Fricasseed! Lard, sir, they'll eat much better smother'd with onions.

Arch. Pshaw! Rot your onions.

Aim. Again, sirrah!—Well, landlord, what you please; but hold, I have a small charge of money, and your house is so full of strangers, that I believe it may be safer in your custody than mine; for when this fellow of mine gets drunk, he minds nothing—Here, sirrah, reach me the strong box.

Arch. Yes, sir——this will give us reputation. [*Aside. Brings the box.*

Aim. Here, landlord, the locks are sealed down, both for your security and mine; it holds somewhat above two hundred pounds: if you doubt it, I'll count them to you after supper; but be sure you lay it where I may have it at a minute's warning; for my affairs are a little dubious at present; perhaps I may

be gone in half an hour; perhaps I may be your guest till the best part of that be spent; and pray order your hostler to keep my horses ready saddled; but one thing above the rest, I must beg that you will let this fellow have none of your anno domini, as you call it;——for he's the most insufferable sot—Here, sirrah, light me to my chamber.

Arch. Yes, sir. [*Exit, lighted by* Archer.

Bon. Cherry, daughter Cherry!

Enter CHERRY.

Cher. D'ye call, father.

Bon. Ay, child, you must lay by this box for the gentleman, 'tis full of money.

Cher. Money! is all that money! why sure, father, the gentleman comes to be chosen parliament-man. Who is he?

Bon. I don't know what to make of him; he talks of keeping his horses ready saddled, and of going perhaps at a minute's warning, or of staying perhaps till the best part of this be spent.

Cher. Ay! ten to one, father, he's a highwayman.

Bon. A highwayman! Upon my life, girl, you have hit it, and this box is some new purchased booty.——Now, could we find him out, the money were ours.

Cher. He don't belong to our gang.

Bon. What horses have they?

Cher. The master rides upon a black.

Bon. A black! ten to one the man upon the black

mare; and since he don't belong to our fraternity, we may betray him with a safe conscience. I don't think it lawful to harbour any rogues but my own. Look'ye, child, as the saying is, we must go cunningly to work; proofs we must have; the gentleman's servant loves drink, I'll ply him that way; and ten to one he loves a wench; you must work him t'other way.

Cher. Father, would you have me give my secret for his?

Bon. Consider, child, there's two hundred pounds to boot. [*Ringing without.*] Coming, coming—— Child, mind your business. [*Exit* Bon.

Cher. What a rogue is my father!—My father! I deny it———My mother was a good, generous, free-hearted woman, and I can't tell how far her good-nature might have extended for the good of her children. This landlord of mine, for I think I can call him no more, would betray his guest and debauch his daughter into the bargain.———by a footman too!

Enter ARCHER.

Arch. What footman, pray, mistress, is so happy as to be the subject of your contemplation?

Cher. Whoever he is, friend, he'll be but little the better for't.

Arch. I hope so, for I'm sure you did not think of me.

Cher. Suppose I had!

Arch. Why then you're but even with me; for the

minute I came in, I was considering in what manner I should make love to you.

Cher. Love to me, friend!

Arch. Yes, child.

Cher. Child! Manners; if you kept a little more distance, friend, it would become you much better.

Arch. Distance! good night, sauce-box. [*Going.*

Cher. A pretty fellow! I like his pride—Sir; pray, sir; you see sir [Archer *returns.*] I have the credit to be trusted with your master's fortune here, which sets me a degree above his footman. I hope, sir, you an't affronted.

Arch. Let me look you full in the face, and I'll tell you whether you can affront me or no.———'Sdeath, child, you have a pair of delicate eyes, and you don't know what to do with 'em.

Cher. Why, sir, don't I see every body?

Arch. Ay, but if some women had them, they would kill every body.——Pr'ythee instruct me; I would fain make love to you, but I don't know what to say.

Cher. Why, did you never make love to any body before?

Arch. Never to a person of your figure, I can assure you, madam; my addresses have always been confined to persons within my own sphere; I never aspir'd so high before. [Archer *sings.*

But you look so bright,
And are dress'd so tight,
That a man would swear you're right,

As arm was e'er laid over.
Such an air
You freely wear
To ensnare
As makes each guest a lover:
Since then, my dear, I'm your guest,
Pr'ythee give me of the best
Of what is ready drest.
Since then my dear, &c.

Cher. "What can I think of this man?" [*Aside.*] Will you give me that song, sir?

Arch. Ay, my dear, take it while it is warm. [*Kisses her.*] Death and fire! her lips are honey-combs.

Cher. And I wish there had been a swarm of bees too, to have stung you for your impudence.

Arch. There's a swarm of cupids, my little Venus, that has done the business much better.

Cher. This fellow is misbegotten as well as I. [*Aside,*] What's your name, sir?

Arch. Name! I gad, I have forgot it. [*Aside.*] Oh, Martin.

Cher. Where was you born?

Arch. In St. Martin's parish.

Cher. What was your father?

Arch. Of——of——St. Martin's parish.

Cher. Then, friend, good night.

Arch. I hope not.

Cher. You may depend upon't.

Arch. Upon what?

Cher. That you're very impudent.

Arch. That you are very handsome.

Cher. That you're a footman.

Arch. That you're an angel.

Cher. I shall be rude.

Arch. So shall I.

Cher. Let go my hand.

Arch. Give me a kiss. [*Kisses her.*

[Boniface *calls without*, Cherry, Cherry.]

Cher. I'm———My father calls! you plaguy devil, how durst you stop my breath so?—Offer to follow me one step, if you dare. [*Exit.*

Arch. A fair challenge, by this light; this is a pretty fair opening of an adventure; but we are knight-errants, and so fortune be our guide. [*Exit.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Gallery in Lady BOUNTIFUL'S *House.* *Mrs.* SULLEN *and* DORINDA *meeting.*

Dorinda.

MORROW, my dear sister; are you for church this morning?

Mrs. Sul. Any where to pray; for heaven alone can help me: but I think, Dorinda, there's no form of prayer in the liturgy against bad husbands.

Dor. But there's a form of law at Doctors' Commons; and I swear, sister Sullen, rather than see you

thus continually discontented, I would advise you to apply to that: for besides the part that I bear in your vexatious broils, as being sister to the husband, and friend to the wife, your examples give me such an impression of matrimony, that I shall be apt to condemn my person to a long vacation all its life. But supposing, madam, that you brought it to a case of separation, what can you urge against your husband? My brother is, first, the most constant man alive.

Mrs. Sul. The most constant husband, I grant ye.

Dor. He never sleeps from you.

Mrs. Dal. No, he always sleeps with me.

Dor. He allows you a maintenance suitable to your quality.

Mrs. Sul. A maintenance! Do you take me, madam, for an hospital child, that I must sit down and bless my benefactors for meat, drink, and clothes? As I take it, madam, I brought your brother ten thousand pounds, out of which I might expect some pretty things called pleasures.

Dor. You share in all the pleasures the country affords.

Mrs. Sul. Country pleasures! Racks and torments! Dost think, child, that my limbs were made for leaping of ditches, and clambering over stiles. Or, that my parents, wisely foreseeing my future happiness in country pleasures, had early instructed me in rural accomplishments, of drinking fat ale, playing at whist, and smoaking tobacco with my husband; or of spreading of plaisters, brewing of diet drinks, and stilling rose-

mary-water, with the good old gentlewoman, my mother-in-law?

Dor. I'm sorry, madam, that it is not more in our power to divert you; I could wish, indeed, that our entertainments were a little more polite, or your taste a little less refined; but pray, madam, how came the poets and philosophers, that laboured so much in hunting after pleasure, to place it at last in a country life?

Mrs. Sul. Because they wanted money, child, to find out the pleasures of the town. Did you ever hear of a poet or philosopher worth ten thousand pounds? If you can shew me such a man, I'll lay you fifty pounds, you'll find him somewhere within the weekly bills. Not that I disapprove rural pleasures, as the poets have painted them in their landscapes; every Phillis has her Corydon; every murmuring stream, and every flowery mead gives fresh alarm to love. Besides, you'll find that their couples were never married. But yonder I see my Corydon, and a sweet swain it is, Heaven knows! Come, Dorinda, don't be angry, he's my husband, and your brother, and, between both, is he not a sad brute?

Dor. I have nothing to say to your part of him, you're the best judge.

Mrs. Sul. O, sister, sister! if ever you marry, beware of a sullen, silent sot—one that's always musing, but never thinks.—There's some diversion in a talking blockhead; and since a woman must wear chains, I would have the pleasure of hearing 'em rattle a little. Now you shall see—but take this by the way, he came

2.

home this morning at his usual hour of four, wakened me out of a sweet dream of something else, by tumbling over the tea-table, which he broke all to pieces. After his man and he had rolled about the room, like sick passengers in a storm, he comes flounce into bed, dead as a salmon into a fishmonger's basket; his feet cold as ice; his breath hot as a furnace; and his hands and his face as greasy as his flannel night cap——Oh, matrimony! matrimony!——He tosses up the clothes with a barbarous swing over his shoulders, disorders the whole economy of my bed, leaves me half-naked, and my whole night's comfort is the tuneable serenade of that wakeful nightingale his nose.——O, the pleasure of counting the melancholy clock by a snoring husband!——But now, sister, you shall see how handsomely, being a well-bred man, he will beg my pardon.

Enter SULLEN.

Sul. My head aches consumedly.

Mrs. Sul. Will you be pleased, my dear, to drink tea with us this morning; it may do your head good?

Sul. No.

Dor. Coffee, brother?

Sul. Pshaw!

Mrs. Sul. Will you please dress, and go to church with me? the air may help you.

Sul. Scrub!

Enter SCRUB.

Scrub. Sir?

Sul. What day o' th' week is this?

Scrub. Sunday, an't please your worship.

Sul. Sunday! bring me a dram; and, d'ye hear, set out the venison-pasty and a tankard of strong beer upon the hall table, I'll go to breakfast. [*Going.*

Dor. Stay, stay, brother, you shan't get off so; you were very naughty last night, and must make your wife reparation. Come, come, brother, won't you ask pardon?

Sul. For what?

Dor. For being drunk last night.

Sul. I can afford it, can't I?

Mrs. Sul. But I can't, sir.

Sul. Then you may let it alone.

Mrs. Sul. But I must tell you, sir, that this is not to be borne.

Sul. I'm glad on't.

Mrs. Sul. What is the reason, sir, that you use me thus inhumanly?

Sul. Scrub!

Scrub. Sir!

Sul. Get things ready to shave my head. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Sul. Have a care of coming near his temples, Scrub, for fear you meet something there that may turn the edge of your razor. [*Exit* Scrub.] Inveterate stupidity! Did you ever know so hard, so obstinate a spleen as his? O, sister, sister! I shall never have any good of the beast till I get him to town; London, dear London is the place for managing and breaking a husband.

Dor. And has not a husband the same opportunities there for humbling a wife?

Mr. Sul. No, no, child; 'tis a standing maxim in conjugal discipline, that when a man would enslave his wife, he hurries her into the country; and when a lady would be arbitrary with her husband, she wheedles her booby up to town.——A man dare not play the tyrant in London, because there are so many examples to encourage the subject to rebel. O, Dorinda!—Dorinda! a fine woman may do any thing in London. O' my conscience, she may raise an army of forty thousand men.

Dor. I fancy, sister, you have a mind to be trying your power that way here in Litchfield; you have drawn the French count to your colours already.

Mrs Sul. The French are a people that can't live without their gallantries.

Dor. And some English that I know, sister, are not averse to such amusements.

Mrs. Sul. Well, sister, since the truth must out, it may do as well now as hereafter; I think one way to rouse my lethargic, sottish husband, is to give him a rival; security begets negligence in all people, and men must be alarmed to make 'em alert in their duty. Women are like pictures, of no value in the hands of a fool, till he hears men of sense bid high for the purchase.

Dor. This might do, sister, if my brother's understanding were to be convinced into a passion for you; but, I believe, there's a natural aversion on his side;

and I fancy, sister, that you don't come much behind him, if you dealt fairly.

Mrs. Sul. I own it; we are united contradictions, fire and water. But I could be contented, with a great many other wives, to humour the censorious vulgar, and give the world an appearance of living well with my husband, could I bring him but to dissemble a little kindness to keep me in countenance.

Dor. But how do you know, sister, but that instead of rousing your husband, by this artifice, to a counterfeit kindness, he should awake in a real fury?

Mrs. Sul. Let him.——If I can't entice him to the one, I would provoke him to the other.

Dor. But how must I behave myself between ye?

Mrs. Sul. You must assist me.

Dor. What, against my own brother?

Mrs. Sul. He's but half a brother, and I'm your entire friend. If I go a step beyond the bounds of honour, leave me; till then, I expect you should go along with me in every thing. The count is to dine here to-day.

Dor. 'Tis a strange thing, sister, that I can't like that man.

Mrs. Sul. You like nothing; your time is not come. Love and death have their fatalities, and strike home one time or other.—You'll pay for all one day, I warrant ye.—But come, my lady's tea is ready, and 'tis almost church-time. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Inn. *Enter* AIMWELL *dressed, and* ARCHER.

Aim. And was she the daughter of the house?

Arch. The landlord is so blind as to think so; but I dare swear she has better blood in her veins.

Aim. Why dost think so?

Arch. Because the baggage has a pert *je-ne-sçay quoi*; she reads plays, keeps a monkey, and is troubled with vapours.

Aim. By which discoveries I guess that you know more of her.

Arch. Not yet, faith. The lady gives herself airs, forsooth; nothing under a gentleman.

Aim. Let me take her in hand.

Arch. Say one word more o' that, and I'll declare myself, spoil your sport there, and every where else. Look ye, Aimwell, every man in his own sphere.

Aim. Right, and therefore you must pimp for your master.

Arch. In the usual forms, good sir, after I have served myself—But to our business. You are so well dress'd, Tom, and make so handsome a figure that I fancy you may do execution in a country church; the exterior part strikes first, and you're in the right to make that impression favourable.

Aim. There's something in that which may turn to advantage. The appearance of a stranger in a

country church, draws as many gazers as a blazing star: no sooner he comes into the cathedral, but a train of whispers runs buzzing round the congregation in a moment.——Who is he? Whence comes he? Do you know him?——Then I, sir, tips me the verger half a crown; he pockets the simony, and inducts me into the best pew in the church; I pull out my snuff-box, turn myself round, bow to the bishop, or the dean, if he be the commanding officer, single out a beauty, rivet both my eyes to her, set my nose a bleeding by the strength of imagination, and shew the whole church my concern, by my endeavouring to hide it; after the sermon, the whole town gives me to her for a lover, and, by persuading the lady that I am dying for her, the tables are turned, and she in good earnest falls in love with me.

Arch. There's nothing in this, Tom, without a precedent; but instead of rivetting your eyes to a beauty, try to fix them upon a fortune; that's our business at present.

Aim. Pshaw! no woman can be a beauty without a fortune. Let me alone for a marksman.

Arch. Tom!

Aim. Aye!

Arch. When were you at church before, pray?

Arch. Um—I was there at the coronation.

Arch. And how can you expect a blessing by going to church now?

Aim. Blessing! Nay, Frank, I ask but for a wife.

[*Exit.*

Arch. Truly, the man is not very unreasonable in his demands. [*Exit at the opposite door.*

Enter BONIFACE *and* CHERRY.

Bon. Well, daughter, as the saying is, have you brought Martin to confess?

Cher. Pray, father, don't put me upon getting any thing out of a man; I'm but young, you know, father, and don't understand wheedling.

Bon. Young! why, you jade, as the saying is, can any woman wheedle that is not young? Your mother was useless at five and twenty. Would you make your mother a whore, and me a cuckold, as the saying is? I tell you, his silence confesses it, and his master spends his money so freely, and is so much a gentleman every manner of way, that he must be a highwayman.

Enter GIBBET *in a cloak.*

Gib. Landlord, landlord, is the coast clear?

Bon. O, Mr. Gibbet, what's the news?

Gib. No matter, ask no questions, all's fair and honourable; here, my dear Cherry, [*Gives her a bag.*] two hundred sterling pounds, as good as ever hanged or saved a rogue; lay 'em by with the rest; and here —three wedding—or mourning rings, 'tis much the same, you know.—Here, two silver hilted swords, I took these from fellows that never shew any part of their swords but the hilts. Here is a diamond necklace, which the lady hid in the privatest place in the

coach, but I found it out. This gold watch I took from a pawnbroker's wife, it was left in her hands by a person of quality, there's the arms upon the case.

Cher. But who had you the money from?

Gib. Ah! poor woman, I pitied her;——from a poor lady just eloped from her husband; she had made up her cargo, and was bound for Ireland, as hard as she could drive; she told me of her husband's barbarous usage, and so, faith, I left her half a crown. But I had almost forgot, my dear Cherry, I have a present for you.

Cher. What is't?

Gib. A pot of ceruse, my child, that I took out of a lady's under petticoat pocket.

Cher. What, Mr. Gibbet, do you think that I paint?

Gib. Why, you jade, your betters do; I'm sure the lady that I took it from had a coronet upon her handkerchief——Here, take my cloak, and go secure the premises.

Cher. I will secure 'em. [*Exit.*

Bon. But, hark ye, where's Hounslow and Bagshot?

Gib. They'll be here to-night.

Bon. D'ye know of any other gentleman o' the pad on this road?

Gib. No.

Bon. I fancy that I have two that lodge in the house just now,

Gib. The devil! how d'ye smoak 'em?

Bon. Why, the one is gone to church.

Gib. To church! That's suspicious, I must confess.

Bon. And the other is now in his master's chamber; he pretends to be a servant to the other; we'll call him out, and pump him a little.

Gib. With all my heart.

Bon. Mr. Martin! Mr. Martin!

Enter ARCHER *combing a perriwig, and singing.*

Gib. The roads are consumed deep, I'm as dirty as Old Brentford at Christmas.——A good pretty fellow that; whose servant are you, friend?

Arch. My master's.

Gib. Really?

Arch. Really.

Gib. That's much.—That fellow has been at the bar, by his evasions:—But pray, sir, what is your master's name?

Arch. Tall, all, dall.—[*Sings and combs the periwig.*] This is the most obstinate curl——

Gib. I ask you his name?

Arch. Name, sir—Tall, all, dall—I never asked him his name in my life—Tall, all, dall.

Bon. What think you now?

Gib. Plain, plain; he talks now as if he were before a judge. But pray, friend, which way does your master travel?

Arch. A horseback.

Gib. Very well again; an old offender——Right—

But I mean does he go upwards or downwards?

Arch. Downwards, I fear, sir—Tall, lall.

Gib. I'm afraid thy fate will be a contrary way.

Bon. Ha, ha, ha! Mr. Martin, you're very arch.—This gentleman is only travelling towards Chester, and would be glad of your company, that's all.—Come, captain, you'll stay to-night, I suppose; I'll shew you a chamber——Come, captain.

Gib. Farewell, friend—— [*Exeunt.*

Arch. Captain, your servant.—Captain! a pretty fellow! 'Sdeath! I wonder that the officers of the army don't conspire to beat all scoundrels in red but their own.

Enter CHERRY.

Cher. Gone, and Martin here! I hope he did not listen: I would have the merit of the discovery all my own, because I would oblige him to love me. [*Aside.*] Mr. Martin, who was that man with my father?

Arch. Some recruiting serjeant, or whipp'd-out trooper, I suppose.

Cher. All's safe, I find. [*Aside.*

Arch. Come, my dear, have you conn'd over the catechise I taught you last night?

Cher. Come, question me.

Arch. What is love?

Cher. Love is I know not what, it comes I know not how, goes I know not when.

Arch. Very well, an apt scholar. [*Chucks her under the chin.*] Where does love enter?

Cher. Into the eyes.

Arch. And where go out?

Cher. I won't tell you.

Arch. What are the objects of that passion?

Cher. Youth, beauty, and clean linen.

Arch. The reason?

Cher. The two first are fashionable in nature, and the third at court.

Arch. That's my dear. What are the signs and tokens of that passion?

Cher. A stealing look, a stammering tongue, words improbable, designs impossible, and actions impracticable.

Arch. That's my good child; kiss me——What must a lover do to obtain his mistress?

Cher. He must adore the person that disdains him, he must bribe the chambermaid that betrays him, and court the footman that laughs at him!——He must, he must——

Arch. Nay, child, I must whip you, if you don't mind your lesson; he must treat his——

Cher. O! aye. He must treat his enemies with respect, his friends with indifference, and all the world with contempt; he must suffer much, and fear more; he must desire much, and hope little; in short, he must embrace his ruin, and throw himself away.

Arch. Had ever man so hopeful a pupil as mine! Come, my dear; why is love called a riddle?

Cher. Because, being blind, he leads those that see;

and, though a child, he governs a man.

Arch. Mighty well.—And why is love pictured blind?

Cher. Because the painters, out of their weakness, or the privilege of their art, chose to hide those eyes they could not draw.

Arch. That's my dear little scholar, kiss me again ——And why should love, that's a child, govern a man?

Cher. Because that a child is the end of love.

Arch. And so ends love's catechism——And now, my dear, we'll go in, and make my master's bed.

Cher. Hold, hold, Mr. Martin——you have taken a great deal of pains to instruct me, and what d'ye think I have learned by it?

Arch. What?

Cher. That your discourse and your habit are contradictions, and it would be nonsense in me to believe you a footman any longer.

Arch. 'Oons, what a witch it is!

Cher. Depend upon this, sir, nothing in that garb shall ever tempt me: for though I was born to servitude, I hate it.——Own your condition, swear you love me, and then——

Arch. And then we shall go make my master's bed?

Cher. Yes.

Arch. You must know then, that I am born a gentleman, my education was liberal; but I went to London a younger brother, fell into the hands of sharpers, who stript me of my money, my friends

disowned me, and now my necessity brings me to what you see.

Cher. Then take my hand———promise to marry me before you sleep, and I'll make you master of two thousand pounds.

Arch. How!

Cher. Two thousand pounds that I have this minute in my own custody; so throw of your livery this instant, and I'll go find a parson.

Arch. What said you? a parson.

Cher. What! Do you scruple?

Arch. Scruple! No, no, but—two thousand pounds you say?

Cher. And better.

Arch. 'Sdeath, what shall I do?——But harkye, child, what need you make me master of yourself and money, when you may have the same pleasure out of me, and still keep your fortune in your own hands?

Cher. Then you won't marry me?

Arch. I would marry you, but———

Cher. O, sweet sir, I'm your humble servant, you're fairly caught. Would you persuade me that any gentleman who could bear the scandal of wearing a livery, would refuse two thousand pounds, let the condition be what it would—No, no, sir—But I hope you'll pardon the freedom I have taken, since it was only to inform myself of the respect that I ought to pay to you. [*Going.*

Arch. Fairly bit, by Jupiter!—Hold, hold! and have you actually two thousand pounds?

Cher. Sir, I have my secrets as well as you—when you please to be more open, I shall be more free; and be assured that I have discoveries that will match yours, be they what they will.——In the mean while be satisfied, that no discovery I make shall ever hurt you; but beware of my father.—— [*Exit.*

Arch. So—we're like to have as many adventures in our inn, as Don Quixote had in his.—Let me see—two thousand pounds! If the wench would promise to die when the money were spent, i'gad, one would marry her; but the fortune may go off in a year or two, and the wife may live——Lord knows how long! Then an inn-keeper's daughter! Aye, that's the devil—there my pride brings me off.

For whatsoe'er the sages charge on pride,
The angels fell, and twenty faults beside;
On earth, I'm sure, 'mong us of mortal calling,
Pride saves man oft, and woman too, from falling.

[Exit.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Lady BOUNTIFUL's *House. Enter Mrs.* SULLEN *and* DORINDA.

Mrs. Sullen.

HA, ha, ha, my dear sister! let me embrace thee, now we are friends, indeed; for I shall have a secret of yours as a pledge for mine——Now you'll be good for something, I shall have you conversable in the subjects of the sex.

Dor. But do you think that I am so weak as to fall in love with a fellow at first sight?

Mrs. Sul. Pshaw! now you spoil all; why should not we be as free in our friendships as the men? I warrant you, the gentleman has got to his confidant already, has avowed his passion, toasted your health, called you ten thousand angels, has run over your lips, eyes, neck, shape, air, and every thing, in a description that warms their mirth to a second enjoyment.

Dor. Your hand, sister: I a'n't well.

Mrs. Sul. So—she's breeding already—Come, child, up with it—hem a little—so—Now tell me, don't you like the gentleman that we saw at church just now?

Dor. The man's well enough.

Mrs. Sul. Well enough! Is he not a demi-god, a Narcissus, a star, the man i' the moon?

Dor. O, sister, I'm extremely ill.

Mrs. Sul. Shall I send to your mother, child, for a little cephalic plaister to put to the soles of your feet? Or shall I send to the gentleman for something for you?——Come, unbosom yourself—the man is perfectly a pretty fellow; I saw him when he first came into church.

Dor. I saw him too, sister, and with an air that shone, methought, like rays about his person.

Mrs. Sul. Well said, up with it.

Dor. No forward coquet behaviour, no air to set him off, no studied looks, nor artful posture,——but nature did it all———

Mrs. Sul. Better and better——One touch more—. Come———

Dor. But then his looks—did you observe his eyes?

Mrs. Sul. Yes, yes, I did——his eyes; well, what of his eyes?

Dor. Sprightly, but not wand'ring; they seemed to view, but never gaz'd on any thing but me—and then his looks so humble were, and yet so noble, that they aimed to tell me, that he cou'd with pride die at my feet, though he scorned slavery any where else.

Mrs. Sul. The physic works purely.——How d'ye find yourself now, my dear?

Dor. Hem! Much better, my dear—Oh, here comes our Mercury!

Enter SCRUB.

Dor. Well, Scrub, what news of the gentleman?

Scrub. Madam, I have brought you a whole packet of news.

Dor. Open it quickly; come.

Scrub. In the first place, I enquired who the gentleman was? They told me he was a stranger. Secondly, I asked what the gentleman was? They answered and said, that they never saw him before. Thirdly, I enquired what countryman he was? They reply'd, 'twas more than they knew. Fourthly, I demanded whence he came? Their answer was, they cou'd not tell. And fifthly, I asked whither he went? And they reply'd, they knew nothing of the matter. ——And this is all I could learn.

Mrs. Sul. But what do the people say? Can't they guess?

Scrub. Why some think he's a spy, some guess he's a mountebank, some say one thing, some another; but for my own part, I believe he's a jesuit.

Dor. A jesuit! why a jesuit?

Scrub. Because he keeps his horses always ready saddled, and his footman talks French.

Mrs. Sul. His footman!

Scrub. Ay, he and the count's footmen were gabbering French like two intriguing ducks in a mill-pond; and I believe they talked of me, for they laugh'd consumedly.

Dor. What sort of livery has the footman?

Scrub. Livery! Lord, madam, I took him for a captain, he's so bedizen'd with lace; and then he has tops to his shoes, up to his mid-leg, a silver headed

cane dangling at his knuckles:—he carries his hands in his pockets, and walks just so—[*Walks in a French air.*] and has a fine long perriwig ty'd up in a bag —Lord, madam, he's clear another sort of a man than I.

Mrs. Sul. That may easily be.——But what shall we do now, sister?

Dor. I have it——This fellow has a world of simplicity, and some cunning; the first hides the latter by abundance.——Scrub.

Scrub. Madam.

Dor. We have a great mind to know who this gentleman is, only for our satisfaction.

Scrub. Yes, madam, it would be a satisfaction, no doubt.

Dor. You must go and get acquainted with his footman, and invite him hither to drink a bottle of your ale, because you're butler to-day.

Scrub. Yes, madam, I am butler every Sunday.

Mrs. Sul. O brave sister! o' my conscience you understand the mathematics already.—'Tis the best plot in the world! Your mother, you know, will be gone to church, my spouse will be got to the alehouse with his scoundrels, and the house will be our own——so we drop in by accident, and ask the fellow some questions ourselves. In the country, you know, any stranger is company, and we're glad to make up with the butler in a country dance, and happy if he will do us the favour.

Scrub. Oh, madam, you wrong me; I never refus'd your ladyship the favour in my life.

Enter GIPSEY.

Gip. Ladies, dinner's upon table.

Dor. Scrub, we'll excuse your waiting.——Go where we order'd you.

Scrub. I shall.

SCENE II.

Changes to the Inn. Enter AIMWELL *and* ARCHER.

Arch. Well, Tom, I find you're a marksman.

Aim. A marksman! who so blind could be as not discern a swan among the ravens?

Arch. Well, but heark'e, Aimwell.

Aim. Aimwell! call me Oroondates, Cesario, Amadis, all that romance can in a lover paint, and then I'll answer. Oh, Archer! I read her thousands in her looks; she look'd like Ceres in her harvest; corn, wine, and oil, milk, honey, gardens, groves, and purling streams, play'd on her plenteous face.

Arch. Her face! her pocket, you mean! the corn, wine, and oil lie there. In short, she has twenty thousand pounds, that's the English on't.

Aim. Her eyes——.

Arch. Are demi-cannons, to be sure; so I wo'nt stand their battery. [*Going.*

Aim. Pray, excuse me, my passion must have vent.

Arch. Passion! what a plague, d'ye think these romantic airs will do our business? Were my temper

as extravagant as yours, my adventures have something more romantic by half.

Aim. Your adventures!

Arch. Yes.

The nymph that with her twice ten hundred pounds,
With brazen engine hot, and coif clear starch'd,
Can fire the guest in warming of the bed———

There's a touch of sublime Milton for you, and the subject but an inn-keeper's daughter. I can play with a girl as an angler does with his fish; he keeps it at the end of his line, runs it up the stream, and down the stream, till at last he brings it to hand, tickles the trout, and so whips it into his basket.

Enter BONIFACE.

Bon. Mr. Martin, as the saying is——yonder's an honest fellow below, my lady Bountiful's butler, who begs the honour that you would go home with him and see his cellar.

Arch. Do my baise-mains to the gentleman, and tell him I will do myself the honour to wait on him immediately, as the saying is.

Bon. I shall do your worship's commands, as the saying is. [*Exit, bowing obsequiously.*

Aim. What do I hear? soft Orpheus play, and fair Toftida sing!

Arch. Pshaw! Damn your raptures; I tell you here's a pump going to be put into the vessel, and the

ship will get into harbour, my life on't. You say there's another lady very handsome there.

Aim. Yes, faith.

Arch. I'm in love with her already.

Aim. Can't you give me a bill upon Cherry in the mean time?

Arch. No, no, friend, all her corn, wine, and oil is ingross'd to my market.——And once more I warn you, to keep your anchorage clear of mine; for if you fall foul of me, by this light, you shall go to the bottom——What! make a prize of my little frigate, while I am upon the cruize for you. You're a pretty fellow indeed! [*Exit.*

Enter BONIFACE.

Aim. Well, well, I won't.——Landlord; have you any tolerable company in the house? I don't care for dining alone.

Bon. Yes, sir, there's a captain below, as the saying is, that arriv'd about an hour ago.

Aim. Gentlemen of his coat are welcome everywhere; will you make a compliment for me, and tell him I should be glad of his company, that's all.

Bon. Who shall I tell him, sir, wou'd——

Aim. Ha! that stroke was well thrown in——I'm only a traveller, like himself, and would be glad of his company, that's all.

Bon. I obey your commands, as the saying is. [*Exit.*

Enter ARCHER.

Arch. 'Sdeath! I had forgot; what title will you give yourself?

Aim. My brother's, to be sure; he would never give me any thing else, so I'll make bold with his honour this bout.——You know the rest of your cue?

Arch. Ay, ay. [*Exit.*

Enter GIBBET.

Gib. Sir, I'm yours.

Aim. 'Tis more than I deserve, sir, for I don't know you.

Gib. I don't wonder at that, sir, for you never saw me before——I hope. [*Aside.*

Aim. And pray, sir, how came I by the honour of seeing you now.

Gib. Sir, I scorn to intrude upon any gentleman—but my landlord——

Aim. O, sir, I ask your pardon, you're the captain he told me of.

Gib. At your service, sir.

Aim. What regiment, may I be so bold?

Gib. A marching regiment, sir; an old corps.

Aim. Very old, if your coat be regimental. [*Aside.* You have serv'd abroad, sir?

Gib. Yes, sir, in the plantations, 'twas my lot to be sent into the worst service; I wou'd have quitted it indeed, but a man of honour, you know——Besides, 'twas for the good of my country that I shou'd be abroad——Any thing for the good of one's country——I'm a Roman for that.

Aim. One of the first, I'll lay my life. [*Aside.*] You found the West Indies very hot, sir.

Gib. Ay, sir, too hot for me.

Aim. Pray, sir, ha'nt I seen your face at Will's Coffee house?

Gib. Yes, sir, and at White's too.

Aim. And where's your company now, captain?

Gib. They an't come yet.

Aim. Why, d'ye expect them here?

Gib. They'll be here to-night, sir.

Aim. Which way do they march?

Gib. Across the country.——The devils in't if I han't said enough to encourage him to declare—but I'm afraid he's not right, I must tack about. [*Aside.*

Aim. Is your company to quarter at Litchfield?

Gib. In this house, sir.

Aim. What, all?

Gib. My company is but thin, ha, ha, ha! we are but three, ha, ha, ha!

Aim. You're merry, sir?

Gib. Ay, sir, you must excuse me. Sir, I understand the world, especially the art of travelling. I don't care, sir, for answering questions directly upon the road—for I generally ride with a charge about me.

Aim. Three or four, I believe. [*Aside.*

Gib. I am credibly inform'd that there are highwaymen upon this quarter; not, sir, that I could suspect a gentleman of your figure——But truly, sir, I have got such a way of evasion upon the road, that I don't care for speaking truth to any man.

Aim. Your caution may be necessary——Then I

presume you're no captain.

Gib. Not I, sir; captain is a good travelling name, and so I take it; it stops a great many foolish enquiries that are generally made about gentlemen that travel: it gives a man an air of something, and makes the drawers obedient——And thus far I am a captain, and no farther.

Aim. And pray, sir, what is your true profession?

Gib. O, sir, you must excuse me—upon my word, sir, I don't think it safe to tell you.

Aim. Ha, ha! upon my word, I commend you.

Enter BONIFACE.

Well, Mr. Boniface, what's the news?

Bon. There's another gentleman below, as the saying is, that hearing you were but two, would be glad to make the third man, if you'd give him leave.

Aim. What is he?

Bon. A clergyman, as the saying is.

Aim. A clergyman! Is he really a clergyman? or is it only is travelling name, as my friend the captain has it?

Bon. O, sir, he's a priest, and chaplain to the French officers in town.

Aim. Is he a Frenchman?

Bon. Yes, sir, born at Brussels.

Gib. A Frenchman, and a priest! I won't be seen in his company, sir; I have a value for my reputation, sir.

Aim. Nay, but captain, since we are by ourselves

—Can he speak English, landlord?

Bon. Very well, sir? you may know him as the saying is, to be a foreigner by his accent, and that's all.

Aim. Then he has been in England before?

Bon. Never, sir, but he's master of languages, as the saying is; he talks Latin; it does me good to hear him talk Latin.

Aim. Then you understand Latin, Mr. Boniface.

Bon. Not I, sir, as the saying is; but he talks it so very fast, that I'm sure it must be good.

Aim. Pray desire him to walk up.

Bon. Here he is, as the saying is.

Enter FOIGARD.

Foig. Save you, gentlemens bote.

Aim. A Frenchman! sir, your most humble servant.

Foig. Och, dear joy, I am your most faithful shervant, and yours alsho.

Gib. Doctor, you talk very good English, but you have a mighty twang of the foreigner.

Foig. My English is very well for the vords, but we foreigners, you know, cannot bring our tongues about the pronunciation so soon.

Aim. A foreigner! a downright Teague, by this light. [*Aside.*] Were you born in France, doctor?

Foig. I was educated in France, but I was borned at Brussels: I am a subject of the king of Spain, joy.

Gib. What king of Spain, sir? Speak.

Foig. Upon my shoul, joy, I cannot tell you as yet.

Aim. Nay, captain, that was too hard upon the doctor, he's a stranger.

Foig. O let him alone, dear joy, I'm of a nation that is not easily put out of countenance.

Aim. Come, gentlemen, I'll end the dispute—Here, landlord, is dinner ready?

Bon. Upon the table, as the saying is.

Aim. Gentlemen——pray——that door.——

Bon. No, no, fait, the captain must lead.

Aim. No, doctor, the church is our guide.

Gib. Ay, ay, so it is— [*Exit foremost, they follow.*

SCENE III.

Changes to a gallery in Lady BOUNTIFUL'S *House. Enter* ARCHER *and* SCRUB *singing, and hugging one another;* SCRUB *with a tankard in his hand,* GIPSEY *listening at a distance.*

Scrub. Tall, all, dall——Come, my dear boy——let's have that song once more.

Arch. No, no, we shall disturb the family——but will you be sure to keep the secret?

Scrub. Pho! upon my honour, as I'm a gentleman.

Arch. 'Tis enough——You must know then, that my master is the lord viscount Aimwell; he fought a duel t'other day in London, wounded his man so dangerously that he thinks fit to withdraw till he hears whether the gentleman's wounds be mortal or not:

he never was in this part of England before, so he chose to retire to this place, that's all.

Gip. And that's enough for me. [*Exit.*

Scrub. And where were you when your master fought?

Arch. We never know of our master's quarrels.

Scrub. No! if our masters in the country here receive a challenge, the first thing they do is to tell their wives; the wife tells the servants, the servants alarm the tenants, and in half an hour you shall have the whole country up in arms.

Arch. To hinder two men from doing what they have no mind for——But if you should chance to talk, now, of this business?

Scrub. Talk! ah, sir, had I not learn'd the knack of holding my tongue, I had never liv'd so long in a great family.

Arch. Ay, ay, to be sure, there are secrets in all families.

Scrub. Secrets, O Lud!——but I'll say no more—Come, sit down, we'll make an end of our tankard; Here——

Arch. With all my heart: who knows but you and I may come to be better acquainted, eh——Here's your lady's health: you have three, I think; and to be sure there must be secrets among 'em.

Scrub. Secrets! Ah! friend, friend!——I wish I had a friend.——

Arch. Am I not your friend? Come, you and I will be sworn brothers.

Scrub. Shall we?

Arch. From this minute——Give me a kiss——And now, brother Scrub——

Scrub. And, now, brother Martin, I will tell you a secret that will make your hair stand an end——You must know, that I am consumedly in love.

Arch. That's a terrible secret, that's the truth on't.

Scrub. That jade, Gipsey, that was with us just now in the cellar, is the errantest whore that ever wore a petticoat, and I'm dying for love of her.

Arch. Ha, ha, ha!——Are you in love with her person, or her virtue, brother Scrub?

Scrub. I should like virtue best, because it's more durable than beauty; for virtue holds good with some women, long and many a day after they have lost it.

Arch. In the country, I grant ye, where no woman's virtue is lost, till a bastard be found.

Scrub. Ay, could I bring her to a bastard, I shou'd have her all to myself; but I dare not put it upon that lay, for fear of being sent for a soldier—Pray, brother, how do you gentlemen in London like that same pressing act?

Arch. Very ill, brother Scrub——'Tis the worst that ever was made for us; formerly, I remember the good days when we could dun our masters for our wages, and if they refused to pay us, we could have a warrant to carry 'em before a justice; but now, if we talk of eating, they have a warrant for us, and carry us before three justices.

Scrub. And to be sure we go, if we talk of eating;

for the justices won't give their own servants a bad example. Now this is my misfortune——I dare not speak in the house, while that jade, Gipsey, dings about like a fury——Once I had the better end of the staff.

Arch. And how comes the change now?

Scrub. Why, the mother of all this mischief is a priest.

Arch. A priest!

Scrub. Ay, a damn'd son of a whore of Babylon, that came over hither to say grace to the French officers, and eat up our provisions——There's not a day goes over his head without a dinner or supper in this house.

Arch. How came he so familiar in the family?

Scrub. Because he speaks English as if he had liv'd here all his life, and tells lies as if he had been a traveller from his cradle.

Arch. And this priest, I'm afraid, has converted the affections of your Gipsey.

Scrub. Converted! ay, and perverted, my dear friend—for I'm afraid he has made her a whore and a papist—But this is not all; there's the French count and Mrs. Sullen, they're in confederacy, and for some private end of their own too, to be sure.

Arch. A very hopeful family, yours, brother Scrub; I suppose the maiden lady has her lover too.

Scrub. Not that I know——She's the best on 'em, that's the truth on't: but they take care to prevent my curiosity, by giving me so much business, that I

am a perfect slave:—What dye think is my place in this family?

Arch. Butler, I suppose.

Scrub. Ah, Lord help your silly head!—I'll tell you—Of a Monday I drive the coach; of a Tuesday I drive the plough; on Wednesday I follow the hounds; on Thursday I dun the tenants; on Friday I go to market; on Saturday I draw warrants; and on Sunday I draw beer.

Arch. Ha, ha, ha! if variety be a pleasure in life, you have enough on't, my dear brother—But what ladies are those?

Scrub. Ours, ours; that upon the right hand is Mrs. Sullen, and the other Mrs. Dorinda——Don't mind 'em, sit still, man—

Enter Mrs. SULLEN *and* DORINDA.

Mrs. Sul. I have heard my brother talk of my lord Aimwell, but they say that his brother is the finer gentleman.

Dor. That's impossible, sister.

Mrs. Sul. He's vastly rich, and very close, they say.

Dor. No matter for that; if I can creep into his heart, I'll open his breast, I warrant him: I have heard say, that people may be guess'd at by the behaviour of their servants; I could wish we might talk to that fellow.

Mrs. Sul. So do I; for I think he's a very pretty fellow: come this way; I'll throw out a lure for him presently.

[*They walk a turn to the opposite side of the stage. Mrs.* Sullen *drops her fan,* Archer *runs, takes it up, and gives it to her.*

Arch. Corn, wine, and oil, indeed—But I think the wife has the greatest plenty of flesh and blood; she should be my choice—Ay, ay, say you so—Madam——your ladyship's fan.

Mrs. Sul. O sir, I thank you——What a handsome bow the fellow made!

Dor. Bow! Why, I have known several footmen come down from London, set up here for dancing-masters, and carry off the best fortunes in the country.

Arch. [*aside.*] That project, for aught I know, had been better than ours—Brother Scrub, why don't you introduce me?

Scrub. Ladies, this is the strange gentleman's servant that you saw at church to-day; I understood he came from London, and so I invited him to the cellar, that he might shew me the newest flourish in whetting my knives.

Dor. And I hope you have made much of him?

Arch. O yes, madam; but the strength of your ladyship's liquor is a little too potent for the constitution of your humble servant.

Mrs. Sul. What, then you don't usually drink ale.

Arch. No, madam, my constant drink is tea, or a little wine and water; 'tis prescrib'd me by the physician, for a remedy against the spleen.

Scrub. O la! O la!—a footman have the spleen—

Mrs. Sul. I thought that distemper had been only proper to people of quality.

Arch. Madam, like all other fashions, it wears out, and so descends to their servants; tho' in a great many of us, I believe it proceeds from some melancholy particles in the blood, occasioned by the stagnation of wages.

Dor. How affectedly the fellow talks!—How long, pray, have you serv'd your present master?

Arch. Not long; my life has been mostly spent in the service of the ladies.

Mrs. Sul. And pray, which service do you like best?

Arch. Madam, the ladies pay best; the honour of serving them is sufficient wages; there is a charm in their looks that delivers a pleasure with their commands, and gives our duty the wings of inclination.

Mrs. Sul. That flight was above the pitch of a livery: and, sir, would not you be satisfied to serve a lady again?

Arch. As groom of the chambers, madam, but not as a footman.

Mrs. Sul. I suppose you serv'd as footman before;

Arch. For that reason I would not serve in that post again; for my memory is too weak for the load of messages that the ladies lay upon their servants in London; my Lady Howd'ye, the last mistress I serv'd, call'd me up one morning, and told me, Martin, go to my Lady Allright with my humble service; tell her I was to wait on her ladyship yesterday, and left word with Mrs. Rebecca, that the prelimina-

ries of the affair she knows of are stopt till we know the concurrence of the person that I know of, for which there are circumstances wanting which we shall accommodate at the old place; but that in the mean time there is a person about her ladyship, that from several hints and surmises, was accessary at a certain time to the disappointments that naturally attend things, that to her knowledge are of more importance——

Mrs. Sul. } Ha, ha! where are you going, sir?
Dor. }

Arch. Why, I ha'n't half done.

Scrub. I should not remember a quarter of it.

Arch. The whole, how d'ye, was about half an hour long; so happened to misplace two syllables, and was turned off, and rendered incapable——

Dor. The pleasantest fellow, sister, I ever saw.—But, friend, if your master be married,—I presume you still serve a lady?

Arch. No, madam, I take care never to come into a married family, the commands of the master and mistress are always so contrary, that 'tis impossible to please both.

Dor. There's a main point gain'd.—My lord is not married, I find. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Sul. But I wonder, friend, that in so many good services, you had not a better provision made for you?

Arch. I don't know how, madam——I am very well as I am.

Mrs. Sul. Something for a pair of gloves.

[*Offering him money.*

Arch. I humbly beg leave to be excused. My master, madam, pays me; nor dare I take money from any other hand, without injuring his honour, and disobeying his commands. [*Exit.*

Scrub. Brother Martin, brother Martin.

Arch. What do you say, brother Scrub?

Scrub. Take the money, and give it to me.

[*Exeunt* Archer *and* Scrub.

Dor. This is surprising. Did you ever see so pretty a well-bred fellow.

Mrs. Sul. The devil take him for wearing the livery.

Dor. I fancy, sister, he may be some gentleman, a friend of my lord's, that his lordship has pitch'd upon for his courage, fidelity, and discretion, to bear him company in this dress, and who, ten to one, was his second.

Mrs. Sul. It is so, it must be so, and it shall be so —For I like him.

Dor. What! better than the count?

Mrs. Sul. The count happened to be the most agreeable man upon the place; and so I chose him to serve me in my design upon my husband——But I should like this fellow better in a design upon myself.

Dol. But now, sister, for an interview with this lord, and this gentleman; how shall we bring that about?

Mrs. Sul. Patience! you country ladies give no

quarter, "if once you be entered."—Would you prevent their desires, and give the fellows no wishing time?—Look'e, Dorinda, if my lord Aimwell loves you or deserves you, he'll find a way to see you, and there we must leave it——My business comes now upon the tapis——Have you prepared your brother?

Dor. Yes, yes.

Mrs. Sul. And how did he relish it?

Dor. He said little, mumbled something to himself, and promised to be guided by me—but here he comes—

Enter SULLEN.

Sul. What singing was that I heard just now?

Mrs. Sul. The singing in your head, my dear; you complained of it all day.

Sul. You're impertinent.

Mrs. Sul. I was ever so, since I became one flesh with you.

Sul. One flesh; rather two carcases joined unnaturally together.

Mrs. Sul. Or rather, a living soul coupled to a dead body.

Dor. So, this is fine encouragement for me!

Sul. Yes, my wife shews what you must do.

Mrs. Sul. And my husband shews you what you must suffer.

Sul. 'Sdeath! why can't you be silent?

Mrs. Sul. 'Sdeath! why can't you talk?

Sul. Do you talk to any purpose?

Mrs. Sul. Do you think to any purpose?

Sul. Sister, hearkʼe—[*Whispers.*] I shanʼt be home till it be late. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Sul. What did he whisper to ye?

Dor. That he would go round the back way, come into the closet, and listen as I directed him.—But let me beg once more, dear sister, to drop this project: for, as I told you before, instead of awaking him to kindness, you may provoke him to rage; and then who knows how far his brutality may carry him?

Mrs. Sul. Iʼm provided to receive him, I warrant you. Away. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Continues. *Enter* DORINDA, *meeting Mrs.* SULLEN *and Lady* BOUNTIFUL.

Dorinda.

NEWS, dear sister, news, news!

Enter ARCHER *running.*

Arch. Where, where is my lady Bountiful?—Pray which is the old lady of you three!

L. Boun. I am.

Arch. O, madam, the fame of your ladyshipʼs charity, goodness, benevolence, skill, and ability, have drawn me hither, to implore your ladyshipʼs help in

behalf of my unfortunate master, who is this moment breathing his last.

L. Boun. Your master! where is he?

Arch. At your gate, madam: drawn by the appearance of your handsome house to view it nearer, and walking up the avenue, he was taken ill of a sudden, with a sort of I know not what: but down he fell, and there he lies.

L. Boun. Here, Scrub, Gipsey, all run, get my easy-chair down stairs, put the gentleman in it, and bring him in quickly, quickly.

Arch. Heaven will reward your ladyship for this charitable act.

L. Boun. Is your master used to these fits.

Arch. O yes, madam, frequently.——I have known him have five or six of a night.

L. Boun. What's his name?

Arch. Lord, madam, he's a dying: a minute's care or neglect, may save or destroy his life.

L. Boun. Ah, poor gentleman! Come, friend, shew me the way, I'll see him brought in myself.

[*Exit with* Archer.

Dor. O, sister, my heart flutters about strangely, I can hardly forbear from running to his assistance.

Mrs. Sul. And I'll lay my life he deserves your assistance more than he wants it. Did not I tell you, that my lord would find a way to come at you? Love's his distemper, and you must be the physician; put on all your charms, summon all your fire into your eyes,

plant the whole artillery of your looks against his breast, and down with him.

Dor. O, sister, I'm but a young gunner; I shall be afraid to shoot, for fear the piece should recoil, and hurt myself.

Mrs. Sul. Never fear; you shall see me shoot before you, if you will.

Dor. No, no, dear sister, you have missed your mark so unfortunately, that I sha'nt care for being instructed by you.

Enter AIMWELL *in a chair, carried by* ARCHER *and* SCRUB, *Lady* BOUNTIFUL, GIPSEY; AIMWELL *counterfeiting a swoon.*

L. Boun. Here, here, let's see the hartshorn drops —Gipsey, a glass of fair water, his fit's very strong ——Bless me how his hands are clench'd!

Arch. For shame, ladies, what d'ye do? Why don't you help us?——Pray, madam, [*To* Dorinda.] take his hand, and open it, if you can, whilst I hold his head. [Dorinda *takes his hand.*

Dor. Poor gentleman!—Oh—he has got my hand within his, and squeezes it unmercifully——

L. Boun. 'Tis the violence of his convulsion, child.

Arch. O, madam, he's perfectly possess'd in these cases.—He'll bite you, if you don't have care.

Dor. Oh, my hand! my hand!

L. Boun. What's the matter with the foolish girl? I have got this hand open, you see, with a great deal of ease.

Arch. Aye, but, madam, your daughter's hand is somewhat warmer than your ladyship's, and the heat of it draws the force of the spirits that way.

Mrs. Sul. I find, friend, you're very learn'd in these sort of fits.

Arch. 'Tis no wonder, madam, for I'm often troubled with them myself; I find myself extremely ill at this minute. [*Looking hard at Mrs.* Sullen.

Mrs. Sul. [*Aside.*] I fancy I could find a way to cure you.

L. Boun. His fit holds him very long.

Arch. Longer than usual, madam.

L. Boun. Where did his illness take him first, pray?

Arch. To-day at church, madam.

L. Boun. In what manner was he taken?

Arch. Very strangely, my lady. He was of a sudden touched with something in his eyes, which at the first he only felt, but could not tell whether 'twas pain or pleasure.

L. Boun. Wind, nothing but wind. Your master should never go without a bottle to smell to——Oh! —he recovers—the lavendar water—some feathers to burn under his nose—Hungary water to rub his temples—O, he comes to himself. Hem a little, sir, hem ——Gipsey, bring the cordial water.

[Aimwell *seems to awake in amaze.*

Dor. How do you, sir?

Aim. Where am I? [*Rising.*

Sure I have pass'd the gulf of silent death,
And now am landed on th' Elysian shore—

Behold the goddess of those happy plains,
Fair Proserpine—Let me adore thy bright divinity.

[*Kneels to* Dorinda, *and kisses her hand.*

Mrs. Sul. So, so, so, I knew where the fit would end.

Aim. Eurydice perhaps——
How could thy Orpheus keep his word,
And not look back on thee?
No treasure but thyself could sure have brib'd him
To look one minute off thee.

L. Boun. Delirious, poor gentleman!

Arch. Very delirious, madam, very delirious.

Aim. Martin's voice, I think.

Arch. Yes, my lord.——How does your lordship?

L. Boun. Lord! did you mind that, girls?

Aim. Where am I?

Arch. In very good hands, sir.——You were taken just now with one of your old fits, under the trees, just by this good lady's house; her ladyship had you taken in, and has miraculously brought you to your self, as you see—

Aim. I am so confounded with shame, madam, that I can now only beg pardon—and refer my acknowledgments for your ladyship's care, till an opportunity offers of making some amends.—I dare to be no longer troublesome.—Martin, give two guineas to the servants.

[*Going.*

Dor. Sir, you may catch cold by going so soon into the air; you don't look, sir, as if you were perfectly recover'd.

[*Here* Archer *talks to Lady* Bountiful *in dumb show.*

Aim. That I shall never be, madam; my present illness is so rooted, that I must expect to carry it to my grave.

L. Boun. Come, sir, your servant has been telling me that you're apt to relapse, if you go into the air—Your good manners sha'n't get the better of ours—You shall sit down again, sir—Come, sir, we don't mind ceremonies in the country——Here, Gipsey, bring the cordial water—Here, sir, my service t'ye—You shall taste my water; 'tis a cordial, I can assure you, and of my own making. [Aimwell *drinks.*] Drink it off, sir.—And how d'ye find yourself now, sir?

Aim. Somewhat better—tho' very faint still.

L. Boun. Ay, ay, people are always faint after those fits. Come, girls, you shall shew the gentleman the house: 'tis but an old family building, sir; but you had better walk about, and cool by degrees, than venture immediately into the air:—but you'll find some tolerable pictures.—Dorinda, shew the gentleman the way. [*Exit.*] I must go to the poor woman below.

Dor. This way, sir.

Aim. Ladies, shall I beg leave for my servant to wait on you, for he understands pictures very well.

Mrs. Sul. Since he understand originals as well as he does pictures, so he may come along.

[*Exeunt* Dorinda, *Mrs.* Sullen, Archer. Aimwell *leads* Dorinda.

Enter FOIGARD *and* SCRUB *meeting.*

Foig. Save you, master Scrub.

Scrub. Sir, I won't be sav'd your way—I hate a priest, I abhor the French, and I defy the devil.—Sir, I am a bold Briton, and will spill the last drop of my blood to keep out popery and slavery.

Foig. Master Scrub, you would put me down in politics, and so I would be speaking with Mrs. Gipsey.

Scrub. Good Mr. Priest, you can't speak with her; she's sick, sir; she's gone abroad, sir; she's—dead two months ago, sir.

Enter GIPSEY.

Gip. How now, impudence! How dare you talk so saucily to the doctor? Pray, sir, don't take it ill; for the common people of England are not so civil to strangers, as—

Scrub. You lie, you lie—'tis the common people, such as you are, that are civilest to strangers.

Gip. Sirrah, I have a good mind to—Get you out, I say.

Scrub. I won't.

Gip. You won't, sauce-box—Pray, doctor, what is the captain's name that came to your inn last night?

Scrub. The captain! ah, the devil! there she hampers me again;—the captain has me on one side, and the priest on t'other—So, between the gown and sword, I have fine time on't. [*Going.*

Gip. What, sirrah, won't you march?

Scrub. No, my dear, I won't march—but I'll walk:——And I'll make bold to listen a little too.

[*Goes behind the side scene, and listens.*

Gip. Indeed, doctor, the count has been barbarously treated, that's the truth on't.

Foig. Ah, Mrs. Gipsey, upon my shoul, now gra, his complainings would mollify the marrow in your bones, and move the bowels of your commiseration; he weeps, and he dances, and he fisties, and he swears, and he laughs, and he stamps, and he sings; in conclusion, joy, he's afflicted, *à la François*, and a stranger would not know whider to cry or to laugh with him.

Gip. What would you have me do, doctor?

Foig. Noting, joy, but only hide the count in Mrs. Sullen's closet, when it is dark.

Gip. Nothing! Is that nothing? It would be both a sin and a shame, doctor.

Foig. Here are twenty louidores, joy, for your shame; and I will give you an absolution for the shin.

Gip. But won't that money look like a bribe?

Foig. Dat is according as you shall tauk it.—If you receive the money before-hand, 'twill be, logice, a bribe: but if you stay till afterwards, 'twill be, only a gratification.

Gip. Well, doctor, I'll take it logice.——But what must I do with my conscience, sir?

Foig. Leave dat wid me, joy; I am your priest, gra; and your conscience is under my hands.

Gip. But should I put the count into the closet—

Foig. Vell, is dere any shin for a man's being in a closhet? One may go to prayers in a closhet.

Gip. But if the lady should come into her chamber, and go to bed?

Foig. Vell, and is dere any shin in going to-bed, joy?

Gip. Ay, but if the parties should meet, doctor?

Foig. Vel den——the parties must be responsible.—Do you begone after putting the count into the closhet; and leave the shins wid themselves.——I will come with the count to instruct you in your chamber.

Gip. Well, doctor, your religion is so pure—"Me-"thinks I'm so easy after an absolution, and can sin "afresh with so much security," that I'm resolved to die a martyr to't—Here's the key of the garden door; come in the back way, when 'tis late—I'll be ready to receive you; but don't so much as whiper, only take hold of my hand; I'll lead you, and do you lead the count, and follow me. [*Exeunt.*

Enter SCRUB.

Scrub. What witchcraft now have these two imps of the devil been a hatching here? There's twenty Lewidores; I heard that, and saw the purse: but I must give room to my betters.

Enter Mrs. SULLEN *and* ARCHER.

Mrs. Sul. Pray, sir, [*To* Archer.] how do you like that piece?

Arch. O, 'tis Leda—You find, madam, how Jupiter came disguis'd to make love———

Mrs. Sul. Pray, sir, what head is that in the corner there?

Arch. O, madam, 'tis poor Ovid in his exile.

Mrs. Sul. What was he banish'd for?

Arch. His ambitious love, madam. [*Bowing.*] His misfortune touches me.

Mrs. Sul. Was he successful in his amours?

Arch. There he has left us in the dark——He was too much a gentleman to tell.

Mrs. Sul. If he were secret, I pity him.

Arch. If he were successful, I envy him.

Mrs. Sul. How d'ye like that Venus over the chimney?

Arch. Venus! I protest, madam, I took it for your picture; but, now I look again, 'tis not handsome enough.

Mrs. Sul. Oh, what a charm is flattery! If you would see my picture, there it is, over the cabinet—How d'ye like it?

Arch. I must admire any thing, madam, that has the least resemblance of you.—But, methinks, madam—[*He looks at the picture and Mrs.* Sullen, *three or four times by turns.*] Pray, madam, who drew it?

Mrs. Sul. A famous hand, sir.

[*Here* Aimwell *and* Dorinda *go off.*

Arch. A famous hand, madam!—Your eyes, indeed, are featured here; but where's the sparkling moisture, shining fluid, in which they swim? The picture, indeed, has your dimples; but where's the

swarm of killing Cupids that should ambush there! The lips too are figured out; but where's the carnation dew, the pouting ripeness, that tempts the taste in the original?

Mrs. Sul. Had it been my lot to have match'd with such a man! [*Aside.*

Arch. Your breasts too, presumptuous man! what! paint Heaven! A-propos, madam, in the very next picture is Salmoneus, that was struck dead with lightning, for offering to imitate Jove's thunder; I hope you serv'd the painter so, madam.

Mrs. Sul. Had my eyes the power of thunder, they should employ their lightning better.

Arch. There's the finest bed in that room, madam; I suppose 'tis your ladyship's bed-chamber.

Mrs. Sul. And what then, sir?

Arch. I think the quilt is the richest that I ever saw—I can't at this distance, madam, distinguish the figures of the embroidery. Will you give me leave, madam?

Mrs. Sul. The devil take his impudence—Sure, if I gave him an opportunity, he durst not be rude. I have a great mind to try———[*Going, returns.*] 'Sdeath! what am I doing!—And alone too!—Sister, sister!

Arch. I'll follow her close——

For where a Frenchman *durst attempt to storm,*
A Briton *sure may well the work perform.* [Going.

Enter SCRUB.

Scrub. Martin! Brother Martin!

Arch. O brother Scrub, I beg your pardon, I was not a going: here's a guinea my master order'd you.

Scrub. A guinea! hi, hi, hi, a guinea! eh——by this light it is a guinea; but I suppose you expect twenty shillings in change.

Arch. Not at all; I have another for Gipsey.

Scrub. A guinea for her! Fire and faggot for the witch——Sir, give me that guinea; and I'll discover a plot.

Arch. A plot!

Scrub. Ay, sir, a plot, a horrid plot—First, it must be a plot, because there's a woman in't: secondly, it must be a plot, because there's a priest in't: thirdly, it must be a plot, because there's French gold in't: and fourthly, it must be a plot, because I don't know what to make on't.

Arch. Nor any body else, I'm afraid, brother Scrub.

Scrub. Truly I'm afraid so too; for where there's a priest and a woman, there's always a mystery, and a riddle——This I know, that here has been the doctor with a temptation in one hand, and an absolution in the other, and Gipsey has sold herself to the devil; I saw the price paid down; my eyes shall take their oath on't.

Arch. And is all this bustle about Gipsey?

Scrub. That's not all; I could hear but a word here and there; but I remember they mentioned a count, a closet, a back-door, and a key.

Arch. The count! did you hear nothing of Mrs. Sullen?

Scrub. I did hear some word that sounded that way: but whether it was Sullen or Dorinda, I could not distinguish.

Arch. You have told this matter to nobody, brother?

Scrub. Told! No, sir, I thank you for that; I'm resolv'd never to speak one word, pro nor con, till we have a peace.

Arch. You're i' th' right, brother Scrub. Here's a treaty a-foot between the count and the lady.—The priest and the chamber-maid are plenipotentiaries.—It shall go hard but I'll find a way to be included in the treaty. Where's the doctor now?

Scrub. He and Gipsey are this moment devouring my lady's marmalade in the closet.

Aim. [*From without.*] Martin, Martin!

Arch. I come, sir, I come.

Scrub. But you forget the other guinea, brother Martin.

Arch. Here, I give it with all my heart.

Scrub. And I take it with all my soul. [*Exeunt severally.*] I'cod, I'll spoil your plotting, Mrs. Gipsey: and if you should set the captain upon me, these two guineas will buy me off. [*Exit.*

Enter Mrs. SULLEN *and* DORINDA, *meeting.*

Mrs. Sul. Well, sister.

Dor. And well, sister.

Mrs. Sul. What's become of my lord?

Dor. What's become of his servant?

Mrs. Sul. Servant! He's a prettier fellow, and a finer gentleman, by fifty degrees, than his master.

Dor. O my conscience, I fancy you could beg that fellow at the gallows foot.

Mrs. Sul. O my conscience, I could, provided I could put a friend of yours in his room.

Dor. You desir'd me, sister, to leave you, when you transgress'd the bounds of honour.

Mrs. Sul. Thou dear censorious country girl—what dost mean? You can't think of the man without the bedfellow, I find.

Dor. I don't find any thing unnatural in that thought; while the mind is conversant with flesh and blood, it must conform to the humours of the company.

Mrs. Sul. How a little love and conversation improve a woman! Why, child, you begin to live.—— You never spoke before.

Dor. Because I was never spoke to before; my lord has told me that I have more wit and beauty than any of my sex; and truly I begin to think the man is sincere.

Mrs. Sul. You're in the right, Dorinda; pride is the life of a woman, and flattery is our daily bread. But I'll lay you a guinea that I had finer things said to me than you had.

Dor. Done.—What did your fellow say to ye?

Mrs. Sul. My fellow took the picture of Venus for mine.

Dor. But my lover took me for Venus herself.

Mrs. Sul. Common cant! Had my spark call'd me a Venus directly, I should have believed him to be a footman in good earnest.

Dor. But my lover was upon his knees to me.

Mrs. Sul. And mine was upon his tiptoes to me.

Dor. Mine vow'd to die for me.

Mrs. Sul. Mine swore to die with me.

Dor. Mine kiss'd my hand ten thousand times.

Mrs. Sul. Mine has all that pleasure to come.

Dor. Mine spoke the softest moving things.

Mrs. Sul. Mine had his moving things too.

Dor. Mine offered marriage.

Mrs. Sul. O Lard! D'ye call that a moving thing?

Dor. The sharpest arrow in his quiver, my dear sister:—Why, my twenty thousand pounds may lie brooding here these seven years, and hatch nothing at last but some ill-natur'd clown like yours:—whereas, if I marry my lord Aimwell, there will be title, place, and precedence, the park, the play, and the drawing-room, splendour, equipage, noise, and flambeaux—Hey, my lady Aimwell's servants there—Lights, lights, to the stairs—My lady Aimwell's coach, put forward—Stand by; make room for her ladyship—Are not these things moving? What, melancholy of a sudden!

Mrs. Sul. Happy, happy sister! Your angel has been watchful for your happiness, whilst mine has slept regardless of his charge—Long smiling years of circling joys for you; but not one hour for me!

[*Weeps.*

Dor. Come, my dear, we'll talk on something else.

Mrs. Sul. O Dorinda, I own myself a woman, full of my sex, a gentle, generous soul,—"easy and yielding to soft desires; a spacious heart, where love "and all his train might lodge:" And must the fair apartment of my breast be made a stable for a brute to lie in?

Dor. Meaning your husband, I suppose.

Mrs. Sul. Husband! No—Even husband is too soft a name for him—But come, I expect my brother here to-night or to-morrow: he was abroad when my father marry'd me; perhaps he'll find a way to make me easy.

Dor. Will you promise not to make yourself easy in the mean time with my lord's friend?

Mrs. Sul. You mistake me, sister—It happens with us as among the men, the greatest talkers are the greatest cowards: and there's a reason for it; those spirits evaporate in prattle, which might do more mischief if they took another course—Though, to confess the truth, I do love that fellow;——and if I met him drest as he should be, and I undrest as I should be——Look'e, sister, I have no supernatural gifts;——I can't swear I could resist the temptation——though I can safely promise to avoid it; and that's as much as the best of us can do. [*Exeunt.*

Enter AIMWELL *and* ARCHER *laughing.*

Arch. And the aukward kindness of the good motherly old gentlewoman,——

Aim. And the coming easiness of the young one,—'Sdeath, 'tis a pity to deceive her.

Arch. Nay, if you adhere to those principles, stop where you are.

Aim. I can't stop, for I love her to distraction.

Arch. 'Sdeath, if you love her a hair's breadth beyond discretion, you must go no farther.

Aim. Well, well, any thing to deliver us from sauntering away our idle evenings at White's, Tom's, or Will's,„ " and be stinted to bare looking at our old " acquaintance, the cards, because our impotent " pockets can't afford us a guinea for the mercenary " drabs; and ten thousand such rascally tricks—— " had we out-liv'd our fortunes among our acquaint- " ance"——But now—

Arch. Aye, now is the time to prevent all this.—Strike while the iron is hot.—This priest is the luckiest part of our adventure; he shall marry you, and pimp for me.

" *Aim.* But I should not like a woman that can be so fond of a Frenchman.

" *Arch.* Alas, sir, necessity has no law; the lady " may be in distress." But if the plot lies as I suspect—I must put on the gentleman.——But here comes the doctor. I shall be ready. [*Exit.*

Enter FOIGARD.

Foig. Save you, noble friend.

Aim. O sir, your servant. Pray, doctor, may I crave your name?

Foig. Fat naam is upon me? My naam is Foigard, joy.

Aim. Foigard! a very good name for a clergyman. Pray, doctor Foigard, were you ever in Ireland?

Foig. Ireland! no, joy. Fat sort of plaace is dat saam Ireland? Dey say, de people are catch'd dere when dey are young.

Aim. And some of 'em here, when they are old—as for example—[*Takes* Foigard *by the shoulder.*] Sir, I arrest you as a traitor against the government; you're a subject of England, and this morning shewed me a commission, by which you served as chaplain in the French army. This is death by our law, and your reverence must hang for it.

Foig. Upon my shoul, noble friend, dis is strange news you tell me; fader Foigard a subject of England! the son of a burgomaster of Brussels a subject of England! Uboboo.———

Aim. The son of a bog-trotter in Ireland! sir, your tongue will condemn you before any bench in the kingdom.

Foig. And is my tongue all your evidensh, joy?

Aim. That's enough.

Foig. No, no, joy, for I will never speak English no more.

Aim. Sir, I have other evidence.——Here, Martin, you know this fellow.

Enter ARCHER.

Arch. [*In a brogue.*] Saave you, my dear cussen, how does your health?

Foig. Ah! upon my shoul dere is my countryman, and his brogue will hang mine. [*Aside.*] *Mynhere, Ick wet neat watt hey zacht, Ick Universton ewe neat, sacramant!*

Aim. Altering your language won't do, sir; this fellow knows your person, and will swear to your face.

Foig. Faash! Fey, is dere brogue upon my faash too?

Arch. Upon my soulvation dere ish, joy——But, cussen Mackshane, vill you not put a remembrance upon me?

Foig. Mackshane! by St. Paatrick, dat is my naame shure enough. [*Aside.*

Aim. I fancy, Archer, you have it.

Foig. The devil hang you, joy——By fat acquaintance are you my cussen?

Arch. O, de devil hang yourshelf, joy; you know we were little boys togeder upon de school, and your fosta[illegible] was marry'd upon my nurse's shist[illegible] we are Irish cussens.

Foig. [illegible] take de relation! Vel joy, and fat school w[illegible]

Arch. I think it was—Aay—'was Tipperary.

Foig. Now, upon my shoul, joy, it was Kilkenny.

Aim. That's enough for us—Self confession——

Come, sir, we must deliver you into the hands of the next magistrate.

Arch. He sends you to gaol, you're try'd next assizes, and away you go swing into purgatory.

Foig. And is it so wid you, cussen?

Arch. It vil be so vid you, cussen, if you don't immediately confess the secret between you and Mrs. Gipsey——Look'ee, sir, the gallows or the secret, take your choice.

Foig. The gallows! Upon my shoul I hate that shame gallows, for it is a diseashe dat is fatal to our family—Vel, den, there is noting, shentlemens, but Mrs. Sullen wou'd speak wid de count in her chamber at midnight, and dere is no harm, joy, for I am to conduct the count to de plaash myself.

Arch. As I guess'd——Have you communicated the matter to the count?

Foig. I have not sheen him since.

Arch. Right agen; why then, doctor,—you shall conduct me to the lady instead of the count.

Foig. Fat, my cussen to the lady! Upon my shoul, gra, dat's too much upon the brogue.

Arch. Come, come, doctor, consider we have got a rope about your neck, and if you offer to squeak, we'll stop your wind-pipe, most certainly; we shall have another job for you in a day or two, I hope.

Aim. Here's company coming this way; let's into my chamber, and there concert our affairs farther.

Arch. Come, my dear cussen, come along.

Foig. Arra, the devil take our rashion. [*Exeunt.*

Enter BONIFACE, HOUNSLOW, *and* BAGSHOT, *at one door*, GIBBET *at the opposite.*

Gib. Well, gentlemen, tis a fine night for our enterprize.

Houns. Dark as hell.

Bag. And blows like the devil; our landlord here has shew'd us the window where we must break in, and tells us the plate stands in the wainscot cupboard in the parlour.

Bon. Ay, ay, Mr. Bagshot, as the saying is, knives and forks, cups and cans, tumblers, and tankards ——There's one tankard, as the saying is, that's near upon as big as me; it was a present to the squire from his god-mother, and smells of nutmeg and toast like an East-India ship.

Houns. Then you say we must divide at the stair head.

Bon. Yes, Mr. Hounslow, as the saying is——At one end of the gallery lies my lady Bountiful and her daughter; and, at the other, Mrs. Sullen—As for the 'squire——

Gib. He's safe enough, I have fairly enter'd him, and he's more than half seas over already———But such a parcel of scoundrels are got about him there, that, I gad, I was asham'd to be seen in their company.

Bon. 'Tis now twelve, as the saying is—Gentlemen, you must set out at one.

Gib. Hounslow, do you and Bagshot see our arms fix'd, and I'll come to you presently.

Houns. and *Bag.* We will. [*Exeunt.*

Gib. Well, my dear Bonny, you assure me that Scrub is a coward.

Bon. A chicken, as the saying is——You'll have no creature to deal with but the ladies.

Gib. And I can assure you, friend, there's a great deal of address and good-manners in robbing a lady; I am the most a gentleman that way that ever travelled the road—But, my dear Bonny, this prize will be a galleon, a Vigo business——I warrant you we shall bring off three or four thousand pound.

Bon. In plate, jewels, and money, as the saying is, you may.

Gib. Why then, Tyburn, I defy thee; I'll get up to town, sell off my horse and arms, buy myself some pretty employment in the law, and be as snug and as honest as e'er a long gown of 'em all.

Bon. And what think you then of my daughter Cherry for a wife?

Gib. Look'e my dear Bonny—Cherry is the goddess I adore, as the song goes; but it is a maxim, that man and wife should never have it in their power to hang one another; for if they should, the Lord have mercy upon them both. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

Continues. Knocking without. Enter BONIFACE.

Boniface.

COMING, coming——A coach and six foaming horses at this time o'night! Some great man, as the saying is, for he scorns to travel with other people.

Enter Sir CHARLES FREEMAN.

Sir Ch. What, fellow! a public house, and a-bed when other people sleep!

Bon. Sir, I an't a-bed, as the saying is.

Sir Ch. I see that, as the saying is! Is Mr. Sullen's family a-bed, think'e?

Bon. All but the 'squire himself, sir, as the saying is; he's in the house,

Sir Ch. What company has he?

Bon. Why, sir, there's the constable, Mr. Gage the exciseman, the hunch-back'd barber, and two or three other gentlemen.

Sir Ch. I find my sister's letters gave me the true picture of her spouse.

Enter SULLEN, *drunk.*

Bon. Sir, here's the 'squire.

Sul. The puppies left me asleep——sir.

Sir Ch. Well, sir.

Sul. Sir, I am an unfortunate man—I have three thousand pounds a year, and can't get a man to drink a cup of ale with me.

Sir Ch. That's very hard.

Sul. Ay, sir—And unless you have pity upon me, and smoke one pipe with me, I must e'en go home to my wife, and I had rather go to the devil by half.

Sir Ch. But I presume, sir, you won't see your wife to-night, she'll be gone to bed——you don't use to lie with your wife in that pickle?

Sul. What! not lie with my wife! Why, sir, do you take me for an atheist or a rake?

Sir Ch. If you hate her, sir, I think you had better lie from her.

Sul. I think so too, friend——But I am a justice of peace, and must do nothing against the law.

Sir Ch. Law! As I take it, Mr. Justice, nobody observes law for law's sake, only for the good of those for whom it was made.

Sul. But if the law orders me to send you to goal, you must lie there, my friend.

Sir Ch. Not unless I commit a crime to deserve it.

Sul. A crime? Oons, an't I marry'd?

Sir Ch. Nay, sir, if you call marriage a crime, you must disown it for a law.

Sul. Eh!—I must be acquainted with you, sir——But, sir, I should be very glad to know the truth of this matter.

Sir Ch. Truth, sir, is a profound sea, and few there be that dare wade deep enough to find the bottom

on't. Besides, sir, I'm afraid the line of your understanding may'nt be long enough.

Sul. Look'e, sir, I have nothing to say to your sea of truth, but if a good parcel of land can entitle a man to a little truth, I have as much as any he in the county.

Bon. I never heard your worship, as the saying is, talk so much before.

Sul. Because I never met with a man that I lik'd before.

Bon. Pray, sir, as the saying is, let me ask you one question: Are not man and wife one flesh?

Sir Ch. You and your wife, Mr. Guts, may be one flesh, because you are nothing else—But rational creatures have minds that must be united.

Sul. Minds!

Sir Ch. Ay, minds, sir. Don't you think that the mind takes place of the body?

Sul. In some people.

Sir Ch. Then the interest of the master must be consulted before that of the servant.

Sul. Sir, you shall dine with me to-morrow—— Oons, I always thought that we were naturally one.

Sir Ch. Sir, I know that my two hands are naturally one, because they love one another, "kiss one "another," help one another in all actions of life; but I could not say so much if they were always at cuffs.

Sul. Then 'tis plain that we are two.

Sir Ch. Why don't you part with her, sir?

Sul. Will you take her, sir?

Sir Ch. With all my heart.

Sul. You shall have her to-morrow morning, and a venison pasty into the bargain.

Sir Ch. You'll let me have her fortune too?

Sul. Fortune! why, sir, I have no quarrel to her fortune———I hate only the woman, sir, and none but the woman shall go.

Sir Ch. But her fortune, sir———

Sul. Can you play at whist, sir?

Sir Ch. No, truly, sir.

Sul. Not at all-fours?

Sir Ch. Neither.

Sul. Oons! where was this man bred? [*Aside.*] Burn me, sir, I can't go home, 'tis but two o'clock.

Sir Ch. For half an hour, sir, if you please—But you must consider 'tis late.

Sul. Late! that's the reason I can't go to bed—— Come, sir——— [*Exeunt.*

Enter CHERRY, *runs across the stage, and knocks at* AIMWELL'S *chamber door. Enter* AIMWELL, *in his night-cap and gown.*

Aim. What's the matter? You tremble, child; you're frighted!

Cher. No wonder, sir—But in short, sir, this very minute a gang of rogues are gone to rob my Lady Bountiful's house.

Aim. How!

Cher. I dogg'd 'em to the very door, and left 'em breaking in.

Aim. Have you alarm'd any body else with the news.

Cher. No, no, sir; I wanted to have discover'd the whole plot, and twenty other things, to your man Martin; but I have search'd the whole house, and can't find him; where is he?

Aim. No matter, child; will you guide me immediately to the house?

Cher. With all my heart, sir; my lady Bountiful is my godmother, and I love Mrs. Dorinda so well———

Aim. Dorinda! the name inspires me; the glory and the danger shall be all my own.—Come, my life, let me but get my sword. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Changes to the bed-chamber in Lady BOUNTIFUL'S *house. Enter Mrs.* SULLEN, *and* DORINDA, *undress'd; a table and lights.*

Dor. 'Tis very late, sister; no news of your spouse, yet?

Mrs. Sul. No, I'm condemn'd to be alone till towards four, and then, perhaps, I may be executed with his company.

Dor. Well, my dear, I'll leave you to your rest; you'll go directly to bed, I suppose.

Mrs. Sul. I don't know what to do; hey-ho!

Dor. That's a desiring sigh, sister.

Mrs. Sul. This is a languishing hour, sister.

Dor. And might prove a critical minute, if the pretty fellow were here.

Mrs. Sul. Here! what in my bed-chamber, at two o'clock i'th' morning, I undress'd, the family asleep, my hated husband abroad, and my lovely fellow at my feet——O gad, sister.

Dor. Thoughts are free, sister, and them I allow you. So, my dear, good night. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Sul. A good rest to my dear Dorinda——— Thoughts are free! are they so? Why then, suppose him here, dress'd like a youthful, gay, and burning bridegroom, [*Here* Archer *steals out of the closet.*] with tongue enchanting, eyes bewitching, knees imploring. [*Turns a little on one side, and sees* Archer *in the posture she describes.*] Ah! [*Shrieks, and runs to the other side of the stage.*] Have my thoughts raised a spirit?——What are you, sir, a man or a devil?

Arch. A man, a man, madam. [*Rising.*

Mrs. Sul. How shall I be sure of it?

Arch. Madam, I'll give you demonstration this minute. [*Takes her hand.*

Mrs. Sul. What, sir! do you intend to be rude?

Arch. Yes, madam, if you please.

Mrs. Sul. In the name of wonder, whence came ye?

Arch. From the skies, madam——I'm a Jupiter in love, and you shall be my Alcmena.

Mrs. Sul. How came you in?

Arch. I flew in at the window, madam; your cousin Cupid lent me his wings, and your sister Venus open'd the casement.

Mrs. Sul. I'm struck dumb with admiration.

Arch. And I with wonder. [*Looks passionately at her.*] How beautiful she looks!———the teeming jolly spring smiles in her blooming face, and when she was conceiv'd her mother smelt to roses, look'd on lilies—

Lilies unfold their white, their fragrant charms,
When the warm sun thus darts into their arms.

[Runs to her.

Mrs. Sul. Ah! [*Shrieks.*]

Arch. Oons, madam, what do you mean? You'll raise the house.

Mrs. Sul. Sir, I'll wake the dead before I'll bear this.—What! approach me with the freedom of a keeper.———I'm glad on't.——Your impudence has cur'd me.

Arch. If this be impudence, [*Kneels.*] I leave to your partial self; no panting pilgrim, after a tedious, painful voyage, e'er bow'd before his saint with more devotion.

Mrs. Sul. Now, now, I'm ruin'd if he kneels. [*Aside.*] Rise, thou prostrate engineer, not all thy undermining skill shall reach my heart. Rise, and

know I am a woman without my sex ; I can love to the tenderness of wishes, sighs and tears——But go no farther—Still to convince you that I'm more than woman, I can speak my frailty, confess my weakness, even for you——But———

Arch. For me! [*Going to lay hold on her.*

Mrs. Sul. Hold, sir, build not upon that——for my most mortal hatred follows, if you disobey what I command you now——leave me this minute——If he denies, I'm lost. [*Aside.*

Arch. Then you'll promise———

Mrs. Sul. Any thing another time.

Arch. When shall I come?

Mrs. Sul. To-morrow; when you will.

Arch. Your lips must seal the promise.

Mrs. Sul. Pshaw!

Arch. They must, they must. [*Kisses her.*] Rapture and paradise! And why not now my angel? The time, the place, silence and secresy all conspire —And now the conscious stars have pre-ordain'd this moment for my happiness. [*Takes her in his arms.*

Mrs. Sul. You will not, cannot, sure.

Arch. If the sun rides fast, and disappoints not mortals of to-morrow's dawn, this night shall crown my joys.

Mrs. Sul. You shall kill me first.

Arch. I'll die with you. [*Carrying her off.*

Mrs. Sul. Thieves, thieves, murder——

Enter SCRUB, *in his breeches, and one shoe.*

Scrub. Thieves, thieves, murder, popery!

Arch. Ha! the very timorous stag will kill in rutting time. [*Draws and offers to stab* Scrub.

Scrub. [*Kneeling.*] O pray, sir, spare all I have, and take my life.

Mrs. Sul. [*Holding* Archer's *hand.*] What does the fellow mean?

Scrub. O madam, down upon your knees, your marrow-bones——he's one of them.

Mrs. Sul. Of whom?

Scrub. One of the rogues——I beg your pardon, one of the honest gentlemen that just now are broke into the house.

Arch. How!

Mrs. Sul. I hope you did not come to rob me?

Arch. Indeed I did, madam; but I would have taken nothing but what you might very well ha' spar'd; but your crying thieves has wak'd this dreaming fool, and so he takes 'em for granted.

Scrub. Granted! 'tis granted, sir; take all we have.

Mrs. Sul. The fellow looks as if he were broke out of Bedlam.

Scrub. Oons, madam, they're broke into the house with fire and sword; I saw them, heard them, they'll be here this minute.

Arch. What, thieves!

Scrub. Under favour, sir, I think so.

Mrs. Sul. What shall we do, sir?

Arch. Madam, I wish your ladyship a good night.

Mrs. Sul. Will you leave me?

Arch. Leave you! Lord, madam, did you not come

mand me to be gone just now, upon pain of your immortal hatred?

Mrs. Sul. Nay, but pray, sir— [*Takes hold of him.*

Arch. Ha, ha, ha, now comes my turn to be ravish'd—You see, madam, you must use men one way or another; but take this by the way, good madam, that none but a fool will give you the benefit of his courage, unless you'll take his love along with it—— How are they arm'd, friend?

Scrub. With sword and pistol, sir.

Arch. Hush!—I see a dark lanthorn coming thro' the gallery——Madam, be assured I will protect you, or lose my life.

Mrs. Sul. Your life! No, sir, they can rob me of nothing that I value half so much; therefore, now, sir, let me intreat you to be gone.

Arch. No, madam, I'll consult my own safety for the sake of yours; I'll work by stratagem. Have you courage enough to stand the appearance of them?

Mrs. Sul. Yes, yes, since I have scap'd your hands I can face any thing.

Arch. Come hither, brother Scrub; don't you know me?

Scrub. Eh? my dear brother, let me kiss thee.

[*Kisses* Archer.

Arch. This way—Here—

[Archer *and* Scrub *hide behind the bed.*

Enter GIBBET *with a dark lanthorn in one hand, and a pistol in the other.*

Gib. Ay, ay, this is the chamber, and the lady alone;

Mrs. Sul. Who are you, sir? What would you have? D'ye come to rob me?

Gib. Rob you! Alack-a-day, madam, I'm only a younger brother, madam; and so, madam, if you make a noise, I'll shoot you through the head. But don't be afraid, madam. [*Laying his lanthorn and pistol upon the table.*] These rings, madam; don't be concerned, madam; I have a profound respect for you, madam; your keys, madam; don't be frighted, madam, I'm the most of a gentleman——[*Searching her pockets.*] This necklace, madam; I never was rude to any lady!—I have a veneration—for this necklace——[*Here* Archer *having come round, and seized the pistol, takes* Gibbet *by the collar, trips up his heels, and claps the pistol to his breast.*

Arch. Hold, profane villain, and take the reward of thy sacrilege.

Gib. Oh! pray, sir, don't kill me; I an't prepared.

Arch. How many are there of 'em, Scrub?

Scrub. Five and forty, sir.

Arch. Then I must kill the villain, to have him out of the way.

Gib. Hold! hold, sir! we are but three, upon my honour.

Arch. Scrub, will you undertake to secure him?

Scrub. Not I, sir? kill him, kill him.

Arch. Run to Gipsey's chamber, there you'll find the doctor; bring him hither presently.

[*Exit* Scrub, *running.*

Come, rogue, if you have a short prayer, say it.

Gib. Sir, I have no prayer at all; the government has provided a chaplain to say prayers for us on these occasions.

Mrs. Sul. Pray, sir, don't kill him——you fright me as much as him.

Arch. The dog shall die, madam, for being the occasion of my disappointment—Sirrah, this moment is your last.

Gib. Sir, I'll give you two hundred pounds to spare my life.

Arch. Have you no more, rascal?

Gib. Yes, sir, I can command four hundred; but I must reserve two of 'em to save my life at the sessions.

Enter SCRUB *and* FOIGARD.

Arch. Here, doctor; I suppose Scrub and you, between you, may manage him—Lay hold of him.

[Foigard *lays hold of* Gibbet.

Gib. What! turn'd over to the priest already——Look'e, doctor, you come before your time; I a'n't condemn'd yet; I thank ye.

Foig. Come, my dear joy, I vil secure your body and your shoul too; I vil make you a good Catholic, and give you an absolution.

Gib. Absolution! Can you procure me a pardon, doctor?

Foig. No, joy.

Gib. Then you and your absolution may go to the devil.

Arch. Convey him into the cellar? there bind him: ——take the pistol, and, if he offers to resist, shoot him thro' the head—and come back to us with all the speed you can.

Scrub. Ay, ay; come, doctor, do you hold him fast, and I'll guard him. [*Exeunt.*

Mrs. Sul. But how came the doctor?

Arch. In short, madam———[*Shrieking without.*] 'Sdeath! the rogues are at work with the other ladies;—"I'm vex'd I parted with the pistol;" but I must fly to their assistance—Will you stay here, madam, or venture yourself with me?

Mrs. Sul. Oh, dear sir, with you.

[*Takes him by the arm and* exeunt.

SCENE III.

Changes to another apartment in the house. Enter HOUNSLOW *dragging in Lady* BOUNTIFUL, *and* BAGSHOT *hauling in* DORINDA; *the rogues with swords drawn.*

Houn. Come, come, your jewels, mistress.

Bag. Your keys, your keys, old gentlewoman.

Enter AIMWELL.

Aim. Turn this way, villains! I durst engage an army in such a cause. [*He engages them both.*]

Enter ARCHER *and Mrs.* SULLEN.

Arch. Hold, hold, my lord; every man his bird, pray. [*They engage man to man; the rogues are thrown down and disarmed.*

Arch. Shall we kill the rogues?

Aim. No, no, we'll bind them.

Arch. Ay, ay; here, madam, lend me your garter? [*To Mrs.* Sullen, *who stands by him.*

Mrs. Sul. The devil's in this fellow; he fights, loves, and banters, all in a breath. Here's a cord, that the rogues brought with them, I suppose.

Arch. Right, right, the rogue's destiny, a rope to hang himself—Come, my lord,—this is but a scandalous sort of an office. [*Binding the rogues together.*] If our adventures should end in this sort of hangman work; but I hope there is something in prospect that—

Enter SCRUB.

Well, Scrub, have you secured your Tartar?

Scrub. Yes, sir, I left the priest and him disputing about religion.

Aim. And pray carry these gentlemen to reap the benefit of the controversy.

[*Delivers the prisoners to* Scrub, *who leads them out.*

Mrs. Sul. Pray, sister, how came my lord here?

Dor. And pray, how came the gentleman here?

Mrs. Sul. I'll tell you the greatest piece of villany. [*They talk apart.*

Aim. I fancy, Archer, you have been more successful in your adventures than the house-breakers.

Arch. No matter for my adventure, yours is the principal—Press her this minute to marry you—now while she's hurried between the palpitation of her fear and the joy of her deliverance; now while the tide of her spirits is at high flood—throw yourself at her feet, speak some romantic nonsense or other—confound her senses, bear down her reason, and away with her—The priest is now in the cellar, and dares not refuse to do the work.

Aim. But how shall I get off without being observed?

Arch. You a lover! and not find a way to get off.—Let me see.

Aim. You bleed, Archer.

Arch. 'Sdeath, I'm glad on't; this wound will do the business. I'll amuse the old lady and Mrs. Sullen about dressing my wound, while you carry off Dorinda.

Enter Lady BOUNTIFUL.

L. Boun. Gentlemen, could we understand how you would be gratified for the services———

Arch. Come, come, my lady, this is no time for compliments; I'm wounded, madam.

L. Boun. and Mrs. Sul. How, wounded!

Dor. I hope, sir, you have received no hurt!

Aim. None but what you may cure—

[*Makes love in dumb show.*]

L. Boun. Let me see your arm, sir—I must have some powder-sugar to stop the blood—O me!—an ugly gash; upon my word, sir, you must go to bed.

Arch. Ay, my lady, a bed would do very well—Madam, [*To Mrs.* Sullen] will you do me the favour to conduct me to a chamber.

L. Boun. Do, do, daughter—while I get the lint, and the probe, and the plaister ready.

[*Runs out one way,* Aim. *carries off* Dor. *another.*

Arch. Come, madam, why don't you obey your mother's commands?

Mrs. Sul. How can you, after what is past, have the confidence to ask me?

Arch. And, if you go to that, how can you, after what is past, have the confidence to deny me?—Was not this blood shed in your defence, and my life exposed for your protection? Look'e, madam, I'm none of your romantic fools that fight giants and monsters for nothing; my valour is downright Swiss; I am a soldier of fortune, and must be paid.

Mrs. Sul. 'Tis ungenerous in you, sir, to upbraid me with your services.

Arch. 'Tis ungenerous in you, madam, not to reward 'em.

Mrs. Sul. How! at the expence of my honour?

Arch. Honour! Can honour consist with ingratitude? If you would deal like a woman of honour, do like a man of honour. D'ye think I would deny you in such a case?

Enter GIPSEY.

Gip. Madam, my lady ordered me to tell you, that your brother is below, at the gate.

Mrs. Sul. My brother! Heavens be prais'd!—Sir he shall thank you for your services, he has it in his power.

Arch. Who is your brother, madam?

Mrs. Sul. Sir Charles Freeman. You'll excuse me, sir, I must go and receive him.

Arch. Sir Charles Freeman! 'Sdeath and hell!—my old acquaintance. Now, unless Aimwell has made good use of his time, all our fair machine goes souse into the sea like the Edistone. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

Changes to the gallery in the same house. *Enter* AIMWELL *and* DORINDA.

Dor. Well, well, my lord, you have conquered. Your late generous action, will, I hope, plead for my easy yielding; though I must own, your lordship had a friend in the fort before.

Aim. The sweets of Hybla dwell upon her tongue.——Here, doctor——

Enter FOIGARD *with a book.*

Foig. Are you prepared, bote?

Dor. I'm ready: but first, my lord, one word—I have a frightful example of a hasty marriage in my own family; when I reflect upon't, it shocks me. Pray, my lord, consider a little———

Aim. Consider! Do you doubt my honour, or my love?

Dor. Neither. I do believe you equally just as brave—And were your whole sex drawn out for me to chuse, I should not cast a look upon the multitude, if you were absent—But, my lord, I'm a woman: colours, concealments may hide a thousand faults in me—Therefore know me better first; I hardly dare affirm I know myself in any thing except my love.

Aim. Such goodness who could injure? I find myself unequal to the task of villain. She has gained my soul, and made it honest like her own—I cannot hurt her. [*Aside.*] Doctor retire. [*Exit* Foigard.] Madam, behold your lover and your proselyte, and judge of my passion by my conversion—I'm all a lie, nor dare I give a fiction to your arms; I'm all a counterfeit, except my passion.

Dor. Forbid it, Heaven! A counterfeit!

Aim. I am no lord, but a poor needy man, come with a mean and scandalous design, to prey upon your fortune:———but the beauties of your mind and person have so won me from myself, that, like a trusty servant, I prefer the interest of my mistress to my own.

"*Dor.* Sure, I have had the dream of some poor

" mariner; a sleeping image of a welcome port, and " wake involv'd in storms."—Pray, sir, who are you?

Aim. Brother to the man whose title I usurped, but stranger to his honour or fortune.

Dor. Matchless honesty!—Once I was proud, sir, of your wealth and title, but now am prouder that you want it. Now I can shew my love was justly levelled, and had no aim but love. Doctor, come in.

Enter FOIGARD *at one door,* GIPSEY *at another, who whispers* DORINDA.

Your pardon, sir; we sha'n't want you now, sir. You must excuse me—I'll wait on you presently.

[*Exit with* Gipsey.

Foig. Upon my shoul, now dis is foolish. [*Exit.*

Aim. Gone! and bid the priest depart—It has an ominous look.

Enter ARCHER.

Arch. Courage, Tom—shall I wish you joy?

Aim. No.

Arch. Oons! man, what ha' you been doing?

Aim. O, Archer, my honesty, I fear, has ruin'd me.

Arch. How!

Aim. I have discovered myself.

Arch. Discovered! and without my consent! What! Have I embark'd my small remains in the same bottom with yours, and you dispose of all without my partnership?

Aim. O, Archer, I own my fault.

Arch. After conviction—'Tis then too late for pardon.———You may remember, Mr. Aimwell, that you propos'd this folly—As you begun, so end it—Henceforth I'll hunt my fortune single——So farewell.

Aim. Stay, my dear Archer, but a minute.

Arch. Stay! What, to be despis'd, expos'd, and laughed at!—No, I would sooner change conditions with the worst of the rogues we just now bound, than bear one scornful smile from the proud knight that once I treated as my equal.

Aim. What knight?

Arch. Sir Charles Freeman, brother to the lady that I had almost——But no matter for that; 'tis a cursed night's work, and so I leave you to make the best on't.

Aim. Freeman!———One word, Archer. Still I have hopes; methought she received my confession with pleasure.

Arch. 'Sdeath, who doubts it?

Aim. She consented after to the match; and still I dare believe she will be just.

Arch. To herself, I warrant her, as you should have been.

Aim. By all my hopes she comes, and smiling comes.

Enter DORINDA *mighty gay.*

Dor. Come, my dear lord—I fly with impatience

to your arms——The minutes of my absence were a tedious year. Where's this priest?

Enter FOIGARD.

Arch. Oons, a brave girl!

Dor. I suppose, my lord, this gentleman is privy to our affairs?

Arch. Yes, yes, madam, I'm to be your father.

Dor. Come, priest, do your office.

Arch. Make haste, make haste, couple 'em any way. [*Takes* Aimwell's *hand.*] Come, madam, I'm to give you——

Dor. My mind's altered; I won't.

Arch. Eh——

Aim. I'm confounded.

Foig. Upon my shoul, and so is my shelf.

Arch. What's the matter now, madam?

Dor. Look'e, sir, one generous action deserves another——This gentleman's honour obliges him to hide nothing from me; my justice engages me to conceal nothing from him; in short, sir, you are the person that you thought you counterfeited; you are the true lord viscount Aimwell, and I wish your lordship joy. Now, priest, you may be gone; if my lord is now pleas'd with the match, let his lordship marry me in the face of the world.

Aim. Archer, what does she mean?

Dor. Here's a witness for my truth.

Enter Sir CHARLES *and Mrs.* SULLEN.

Sir Ch. My dear lord Aimwell, I wish you joy.

Aim. Of what?

Sir Ch. Of your honour and estate. Your brother died the day before I left London; and all your friends have writ after you to Brussels; among the rest I did myself the honour.

Arch. Heark'e, sir knight, don't you banter now?

Sir Ch. 'Tis truth, upon my honour.

Aim. Thanks to the pregnant stars that form'd this accident.

Arch. Thanks to the womb of time that brought it forth; away with it.

Aim. Thanks to my guardian angel that led me to the prize——— [*Taking* Dorinda's *hand.*

Arch. And double thanks to the noble sir Charles Freeman. My lord, I wish you joy. My lady, I wish you joy——I'gad, Sir Freeman, you're the honestest fellow living——'Sdeath, I'm grown strangely airy upon this matter—My lord, how d'ye?—A word, my lord. Don't you remember something of a previous agreement that entitles me to the moiety of this lady's fortune, which, I think, will amount to ten thousand pounds?

Aim. Not a penny, Archer. You would ha' cut my throat just now, because I would not deceive this lady.

Arch. Ay, and I'll cut your throat still, if you should deceive her now.

Aim. That's what I expect; and to end the dispute, the lady's fortune is twenty thousand pounds; we'll

divide stakes; take the twenty thousand pounds, or the lady.

Dor. How! Is your lordship so indifferent?

Arch. No, no, no, madam, his lordship knows very well that I'll take the money; I leave you to his lordship, and so we're both provided for.

Enter FOIGARD,

Foig. Arra fait, de people do say you be all robb'd, joy.

Aim. The ladies have been in some danger, sir, as you saw.

Foig. Upon my shoul our inn be robb'd too.

Aim. Our inn! By whom?

Foig. Upon my shalvation, our landlord has robb'd himself, and run away wid de money.

Arch. Robbed himself!

Foig. Ay fait! and me too of a hundred pounds.

Arch. Robb'd you of a hundred pounds!

Foig. Yes, fait honny, that I did owe to him.

Aim. Our money's gone, Frank.

Arch. Rot the money, my wench is gone——— *Scavez vous quelquechose de Mademoiselle* Cherry?

Enter a Fellow with a strong Box and Letter.

Fell. Is there one Martin here?

Arch. Ay, ay—who wants him?

Fell. I have a box here, and a letter, for him.

Aim. [*Taking the box.*] Ha, ha, ha, what's here

Legerdemain! By this light, my lord, our money again. But this unfolds the riddle. [*Opening the letter, reads.*] Hum, hum, hum——O, 'tis for the public good, and must be communicated to the company.

Mr. Martin,

My father, being afraid of an impeachment by the rogues that are taken to-night, is gone off; but if you can procure him a pardon, he'll make great discoveries that may be useful to the country. Could I have met you instead of your master to-night, I would have deliver'd myself into your hands, with a sum that much exceeds that in your strong box, which I have sent you, with an assurance to my dear Martin, *that I shall ever be his most faithful friend till death,* Cherry Boniface.

There's a billet-doux for you——As for the father, I think he ought to be encouraged; and for the daughter——pray, my lord, persuade your bride to take her into her service instead of Gipsey.

Aim. I can assure you, madam, your deliverance was owing to her discovery.

Dor. Your command, my lord, will do without the obligation. I'll take care of her.

Sir Ch. This good company meets opportunely in favour of a design I have in behalf of my unfortunate sister. I intend to part her from her husband—Gentlemen, will you assist me?

Arch. Assist you! 'Sdeath, who would not?

Foig. Ay, upon my shoul, we'll all ashist.

Enter SULLEN.

Sul. What's all this? They tell me, spouse, that you had like to have been robb'd.

Mrs. Sul. Truly, spouse, I was pretty near it——had not these two gentlemen interpos'd.

Sul. How came these gentlemen here?

Mrs. Sul. That's his way of returning thanks, you must know.

Foig. Ay, but upon my conscience de question be à-propos for all dat.

Sir Ch. You promis'd last night, sir, that you would deliver your lady to me this morning.

Sul. Humph.

Arch. Humph! What do you mean by Humph?—Sir, you shall deliver her——In short, sir, we have sav'd you and your family; and if you are not civil, we'll unbind the rogues, join with 'em, and set fire to your house———What does the man mean? Not part with his wife!

Foig. Arra, not part wid your wife! Upon my shoul, de man dosh not understand common shivility.

Mrs. Sul. Hold, gentlemen, all things here must move by consent. Compulsion would spoil us. Let my dear and I talk the matter over, and you shall judge it between us.

Sul. Let me know first, who are to be our judges.———Pray, sir, who are you?

Sir Ch. I am sir Charles Freeman, come to take away your wife.

Sul. And you, good sir?

Aim. Thomas viscount Aimwell, co
your sister.

Sul. And you, pray, sir?

Arch. Francis Archer, esq. come—

Sul. To take away my mother, I ho
men, you're heartily welcome. I ne
three more obliging people since I w
now, my dear, if you please, you shall
word.

Arch. And the last, for five pounds.

Mrs. Sul. Spouse.

Sul. Rib.

Mrs. Sul. How long have you been mar

Sul. By the almanack, fourteeen month
my account, fourteen years.

Mrs. Sul. 'Tis thereabout by my reckoni

Foig. Upon my conshience dere accounts

Mrs. Sul. Pray, spouse, what did you m

Sul. To get an heir to my estate.

Sir Ch. And have you succeeded?

Sul. No.

Arch. The condition fa[illegible]s of his side—
dam, what did you marry for?

Mrs. Sul. To support the weakness of my
strength of his, and to enjoy the pleasures of
able society.

Sir Ch. Are your expections answer'd?

Mrs. Sul. No.

oneys, a clear cause, a clear cause!
are the bars to your mutual content-

the first place, I can't drink ale with

I drink tea with her.
can't hunt with you.
n I dance with you.
hate cocking and racing.
r ombre and picquet.
our silence is intolerable.
prating is worse.
. Have we not been a perpetual offence to
r——a gnawing vulture at the heart?
frightful goblin to the sight.
ul. A porcupine to the feeling.
erpetual wormwood to the taste."
. Is there on earth a thing we can agree

——to part.
. With all my heart.
r hand.
. Here.
se hands joined us, these shall part us——

. East.
est.
. North.
uth; far as the poles asunder.

Foig. Upon my shoul, a very pretty sheremony.

Sir Ch. Now, Mr. Sullen, there wants only my sister's fortune to make us easy.

Sul. Sir Charles, you love your sister, and I love her fortune; every one to his fancy.

Arch. Then you won't refund.

Sul. Not a stiver.

Arch. What is her portion?

Sir Ch. Twenty thousand pounds, sir.

Arch. I'll pay it. My lord, I thank him, has enabled me, and, if the lady pleases, she shall go home with me. This night's adventure has proved strangely lucky to us all—For captain Gibbet, in his walk, has made bold, Mr. Sullen, with your study and escritore, and has taken out all the writings of your estate, all the articles of marriage with your lady, bills, bonds, leases, receipts to an infinite value; I took 'em from him, and will deliver them to sir Charles.

Gives him a parcel of papers and parchments."

Sul. How, my writings! my head aches consumedly. Well, gentlemen, you shall have her fortune, but I can't talk. If you have a mind, sir Charles, to be merry, and celebrate my sister's wedding, and my divorce, you may command my house! but my head aches consumedly—Scrub, bring me a dram.

Arch. 'Twould be hard to guess which of these parties is the better pleas'd, the couple join'd, or the couple parted; the one rejoicing in hopes of an untasted happiness, and the other in their deliverance from an experienced misery.

Both happy in their several states we find;
These parted by consent, and those conjoin'd.
Consent, if mutual, saves the lawyer's fee;
Consent is law enough to set you free.

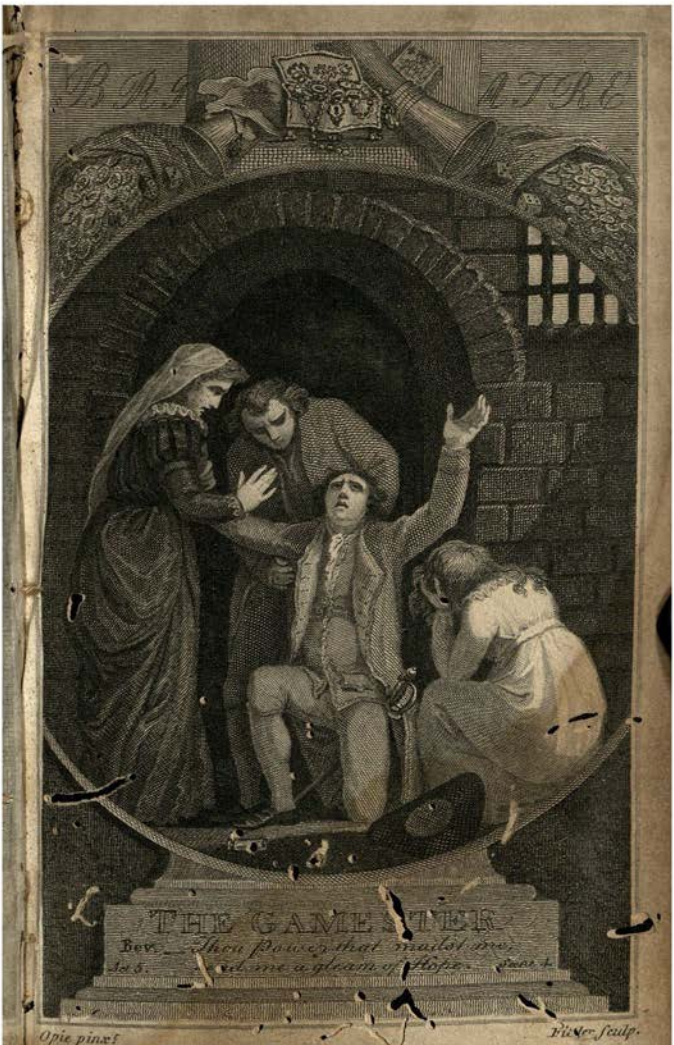
Act IV. THE GAMESTER. Scene

De Wilde pinxt. Leney sculp.

MR HULL as JARVIS

Alas, Sir! forgive your griefs & let me lead you to her.

London, Printed for J. Bell, British Library, Strand, Aug.t 4 1792


THE GAMESTER
Bev. — Thou Power, that mailst me
Act 5. — el me a gleam of Hope — Scene 1.
Opie pinxt
Fiver sculp.
London. Printed for J. Bell British Library, Strand. Augst 1 1792.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

HENRY PELHAM.

SIR,

IT was a very fine piece of oratory of a young lawyer at the bar, who, as counsel against a highwayman, observed that the prosecutor had been robbed of a certain quantity of ore, which being purified by fire, cut into circular pieces, and impressed with the image of a king and the arms of a state, brought with it the necessaries, the conveniences, and the luxuries of life. I'll be hanged, says an honest country gentleman who was standing by, if this flourishing fool does not mean money. But if he had said it in one word, would not all the rest have been implied?

Just such a censure as this should I deserve, if, in an address to Mr. Pelham, I endeavoured to enumerate the qualities he possesses. The characters of great men are generally connected with their names; and it is impossible for any one to read the name of Mr. Pelham, without connecting with it, in his own mind, the virtues of humanity.

It is therefore sufficient that I desire his acceptance of this Play; that I acknowledge the obligations I owe him, and that I subscribe myself

His most grateful,

And most obedient servant,

EDW. MOORE.

THE GAMESTER.

If there be one vice more pernicious than all the rest of the black catalogue which debases humanity, it is that of GAMING.—To that pernicious passion this Play is a noble antidote.—The present age is unhappily more distinguished by this than any other pursuit; it infects those most who are to lead in fashion, and subverts every generous quality of our nature in its progress.

He, whose ill-luck and deficiency of resource reduce him to the necessity of trick and deception, when detected, is expelled the company of *honourable* Gamblers, and reduced to gull inferior credulity with the manners of the fashionable, and the artifices of a villain.—By degrees, society is armed against this degraded plunderer—shut out from the haunts which admit *every* description of RUFFIAN but his *own*, he is driven to unlicensed depredations upon the highway, and in regular progression of association from the Peer down to the pickpocket, the *gibbet* but finishes what the *hazard-table* began.

If MOORE, the Author of the present affecting Tragedy, had done nothing else for mankind, he deserves to rank among the best benefactors to Society of the Republic of Letters.

PROLOGUE.

Written and Spoken by Mr. GARRICK.

LIKE fam'd La Mancha's knight, who, lance in hand,
Mounted his steed to free th' enchanted land,
Our Quixote bard sets out a monster taming,
Arm'd at all points, to fight that hydra—Gaming.
Aloft on Pegasus he waves his pen,
And hurls defiance at the caitiff's den:
The first on fancy'd giants spent his rage,
But this has more than windmills to engage.
He combats passion, rooted in the soul,
Whose powers at once delight ye and controul;
Whose magic bondage each lost slave enjoys,
Nor wishes freedom, though the spell destroys.
To save our land from this magician's charms,
And rescue maids and matrons from his arms,
Our knight poetic comes—And, Oh, ye fair!
This black Enchanter's wicked arts beware!
His subtle poison dims the brightest eyes,
And, at his touch, each grace and beauty dies.
Love, gentleness, and joy, to rage give way,
And the soft dove becomes a bird of prey.
May this our bold advent'rer break the spell,
And drive the dæmon to his native hell.

Ye slaves of passion, and ye dupes of chance,
Wake all your pow'rs from this destructive trance!
Shake off the shackles of this tyrant vice:
Hear other calls than those of cards and dice:
Be learn'd in nobler arts than arts of play,
And other debts than those of honour pay.
No longer live insensible to shame,
Lost to your country, families, and fame.
Could our romantic muse this work achieve,
Would there one honest heart in Britain grieve?
Th' attempt, though wild, would not in vain be made,
If ev'ry honest hand would lend its aid.

Dramatis Personæ.

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

BEVERLEY,	Mr. Kemble.
LEWSON,	Mr. Bensley.
STUKELY,	Mr. Palmer.
JARVIS,	Mr. Aickin.
BATES,	Mr. Packer.
DAWSON,	Mr. Phillimore.
Waiter,	Mr. Lyons.

Women.

Mrs. BEVERLEY,	Mrs. Siddons.
CHARLOTTE,	Mrs. Kemble.
LUCY,	Mrs. Heard.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

BEVERLEY,	Mr. Pope.
LEWSON,	Mr. Farren.
STUKELY,	Mr. Aickin.
JARVIS,	Mr. Hull.
BATES,	Mr. Fearon.
DAWSON,	Mr. Thompson.
Waiter,	Mr. Ledger.

Women.

Mrs. BEVERLEY,	Mrs. Pope.
CHARLOTTE,	Mrs. Wells.
LUCY,	Mrs. Platt.

THE GAMESTER.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter Mrs. BEVERLEY *and* CHARLOTTE.

Mrs. Beverley.

BE comforted, my dear; all may be well yet. And now, methinks, the lodging begins to look with another face. Oh, sister! sister! if these were all my hardships; if all I had to complain of were no more than quitting my house, servants, equipage, and shew, your pity would be weakness.

Char. Is poverty nothing then?

Mrs. Bev. Nothing in the world, if it affected only me. While we had a fortune, I was the happiest of the rich: and now 'tis gone, give me but a bare subsistence and my husband's smiles, and I'll be the happiest of the poor. To me now, these lodgings want nothing but their master. Why do you look at me?

Char. That I may hate my brother.

Mrs. Bev. Don't talk so, Charlotte.

Char. Has he not undone you?——Oh, this pernicious vice of gaming! But, methinks, his usual hours

of four or five in the morning might have contented him; 'twas misery enough to wake for him till then. Need he have staid out all night?——I shall learn to detest him.

Mrs. Bev. Not for the first fault. He never slept from me before.

Char. Slept from you! No, no, his nights have nothing to do with sleep. How has this one vice driven him from every virtue!——Nay, from his affections, too!——The time was, sister——

Mrs. Bev. And is. I have no fear of his affections. Would I knew that he were safe!

Char. From ruin and his companions.—But that's impossible. His poor little boy, too! What must become of him?

Mrs. Bev. Why, want shall teach him industry. From his father's mistakes he shall learn prudence, and from his mother's resignation, patience. Poverty has no such terrors in it as you imagine. There's no condition of life, sickness and pain excepted, where happiness is excluded. The husbandman, who rises early to his labour, enjoys more welcome rest at night for't. His bread is sweeter to him; his home happier; his family dearer; his enjoyments surer. The sun that rouses him in the morning, set's in the evening to release him. All situations have their comforts, if sweet contentment dwell in the heart. But my poor Beverley has none. The thought of having ruined those he loves, is misery for ever to him. Would I could ease his mind of that!

Char. If he alone were ruined, 'twere just he should be punished. He is my brother, 'tis true; but when I think of what he has done; of the fortune you brought him; of his own large estate too, squandered away upon this vilest of passions, and among the vilest of wretches! Oh, I have no patience! My own little fortune is untouched, he says. Would I were sure on't.

Mrs. Bev. And so you may——'twould be a sin to doubt it.

Char. I will be sure on't——'twas madness in me to give it to his management. But I'll demand it from him this morning. I have a melancholy occasion for it.

Mrs. Bev. What occasion?

Char. To support a sister.

Mrs. Bev. No; I have no need on't. Take it, and reward a lover with it.——The generous Lewson deserves much more.——Why won't you make him happy?

Char. Because my sister's miserable.

Mrs. Bev. You must not think so. I have my jewels left yet. I'll sell them to supply our wants; and when all's gone, these hands shall toil for our support. The poor should be industrious—Why those tears, Charlotte?

Char. They flow in pity for you.

Mrs. Bev. All may be well yet. When he has nothing to lose I shall fetter him in these arms again; and then what is it to be poor?

Char. Cure him but of this destructive passion, and my uncle's death may retrieve all yet.

Mrs. Bev. Ay, Charlotte, could we cure him. But the disease of play admits no cure but poverty; and the loss of another fortune would but increase his shame and his affliction. Will Mr. Lewson call this morning?

Char. He said so last night. He gave me hints too, that he had suspicions of our friend Stukely.

Mrs. Bev. Not of treachery to my husband? That he loves play, I know, but surely he's honest.

Char. He would fain be thought so; therefore I doubt him. Honesty needs no pains to set itself off.

Enter LUCY.

Mrs. Bev. What now, Lucy?

Lucy. Your old steward, madam. I had not the heart to deny him admittance, the good old man begged so hard for't. [*Exit* Lucy.

Enter JARVIS.

Mrs. Bev. Is this well, Jarvis? I desired you to avoid me.

Jar. Did you, madam? I am an old man, and had forgot. Perhaps, too, you forbad my tears; but I am old, madam, and age will be forgetful.

Mrs. Bev. The faithful creature! how he moves me. [*To* Char.

Char. Not to have seen him had been cruelty.

Jar. I have forgot these apartments too. I remem-

ber none such in my young master's house; and yet I have lived in't these five and twenty years. His good father would not have dismissed me.

Mrs. Bev. He had no reason, Jarvis.

Jar. I was faithful to him while he lived, and when he died, he bequeathed me to his son. I have been faithful to him, too.

Mrs. Bev. I know it, I know it, Jarvis.

Char. We both know it.

Jar. I am an old man, madam, and have not a long time to live. I asked but to have died with him, and he dismissed me.

Mrs. Bev. Pr'ythee no more of this! 'Twas his poverty that dismissed you.

Jar. Is he indeed so poor, then?—Oh! he was the joy of my old heart——But must his creditors have all?—And have they sold his house too? His father built it when he was but a prating boy. The times that I have carried him in these arms! And, Jarvis, says he, when a beggar has asked charity of me, why should people be poor? You shan't be poor, Jarvis; if I were a king, nobody should be poor. Yet he is poor. And then he was so brave!——Oh, he was a brave little boy! And yet so merciful, he'd not have killed the gnat that stung him.

Mrs. Bev. Speak to him, Charlotte; for I cannot.

"*Char.* When I have wiped my eyes."

Jar. I have a little money, madam; it might have been more, but I have loved the poor. All that I have is yours.

Mrs. Bev. No, Jarvis; we have enough yet. I thank you, though, and will deserve your goodness.

Jar. But shall I see my master? And will he let me attend him in his distresses? I'll be no expence to him; and 'twill kill me to be refused. Where is he, madam?

Mrs. Bev. Not at home, Jarvis. You shall see him another time.

Char. To-morrow, or the next day—Oh, Jarvis! what a change is here?

Jar. A change indeed, madam! my old heart aches at it. And yet, methinks——But here's somebody coming.

Enter LUCY *with* STUKELY.

Lucy. Mr. Stukely, madam. [*Exit.*

Stuke. Good morning to you, ladies. Mr. Jarvis, your servant. Where's my friend, madam? [*To Mrs.* Bev.

Mrs. Bev. I should have asked that question of you. Have you seen him to-day?

Stuke. No, madam.

Char. Nor last night?

Stuke. Last night! Did he not come home, then?

Mrs. Bev. No. Were you not together?

Stuke. At the beginning of the evening; but not since. Where can he have staid?

Char. You call yourself his friend, sir; why do you encourage him in this madness of gaming?

Stuke. You have asked me that question before,

madam; and I told you my concern was that I could not save him; Mr. Beverley is a man, madam; and if the most friendly entreaties have no effect upon him, I have no other means. My purse has been his, even to the injury of my fortune. If that has been encouragement, I deserve censure; but I meant it to retrieve him.

Mrs. Bev. I don't doubt it, sir; and I thank you—But where did you leave him last night?

Stuke. At Wilson's, madam, if I ought to tell; in company I did not like. Possibly he may be there still. Mr. Jarvis knows the house, I believe.

Jar. Shall I go, madam?

Mrs. Bev. No, he may take it ill.

Char. He may go as from himself.

Stuke. And, if he pleases, madam, without naming me. I am faulty myself, and should conceal the errors of a friend. But I can refuse nothing here.

[*Bowing to the ladies.*

Jar. I would fain see him, methinks.

Mrs. Bev. Do so, then; but take care how you upbraid him—I have never upbraided him.

Jar. Would I could bring him comfort! [*Exit.*

Stuke. Don't be too much alarmed, madam. All men have their errors, and their times of seeing them. Perhaps my friend's time is not come yet. But he has an uncle; and old men don't live for ever. You should look forward, madam; we are taught how to value a second fortune by the loss of a first.

[*Knocking at the door.*

Mrs. Bev. Hark!——No—— that knocking was too rude for Mr. Beverley. Pray heaven he be well!

Stuke. Never doubt it, madam. You shall be well, too—Every thing shall be well. [*Knocking again.*

Mrs. Bev. The knocking is a little loud, though—Who waits there? Will none of you answer?—None of you, did I say?—Alas, what was I thinking of! I had forgot myself.

Char. I'll go, sister——But don't be alarmed so. [*Exit.*

Stuke. What extraordinary accident have you to fear, madam?

Mrs. Bev. I beg your pardon; but 'tis ever thus with me in Mr. Beverley's absence. No one knocks at the door, but I fancy it is a messenger of ill news.

Stuke. You are too fearful, madam; 'twas but one night of absence; and if ill thoughts intrude (as love is always doubtful), think of your worth and beauty, and drive them from your breast.

Mrs. Bev. What thoughts? I have no thoughts that wrong my husband.

Stuke. Such thoughts indeed would wrong him. The world is full of slander; and every wretch that knows himself unjust, charges his neighbour with like passions; and by the general frailty hides his own——If you are wise, and would be happy, turn a deaf ear to such reports. 'Tis sin to believe them.

Mrs. Bev. Ay, worse than sin. 'Twould be to sin against conviction. Why was it mentioned?

Stuke. To guard you against rumour. The sport of

half mankind is mischief; and for a single error they make men devils. If their tales reach you, disbelieve them.

Mrs. Bev. What tales? By whom? Why told? I have heard nothing—or if I had, with all his errors, my Beverley's firm faith admits no doubt—It is my safety, my seat of rest and joy, while the storm threatens round me. I'll not forsake it. [Stukely *sighs and looks down.*] Why turn you, sir, away? and, why that sigh?

Stuke. I was attentive, madam; and sighs will come we know not why. Perhaps I have been too busy—If it should seem so, impute my zeal to friendship, that meant to guard you against evil tongues. Your Beverley is wronged, slandered most vilely—My life upon his truth.

Mrs. Bev. And mine too. Who is't that doubts it? But no matter——I am prepared, sir——Yet why this caution?——You are my husband's friend; I think you mine too; the common friend of both. [*Pauses.*] I had been unconcerned else.

Stuke. For Heaven's sake, madam, be so still! I meant to guard you against suspicion, not to alarm it.

Mrs. Bev. Nor have you, sir. Who told you of suspicion? I have a heart it cannot reach.

Stuke. Then I am happy—I would say more—but am prevented.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Mrs. Bev. Who was it, Charlotte?

Char. What a heart has that Jarvis!—A creditor, sister. But the good old man has taken him away—Don't distress his wife; don't distress his sister, I could hear him say. 'Tis cruel to distress the afflicted——And when he saw me at the door, he begged pardon that his friend had knocked so loud.

Stuke. I wish I had known of this. Was it a large demand, madam?

Char. I heard not that; but visits, such as these, we must expect often—Why so distress'd, sister? This is no new affliction.

Mrs. Bev. No, Charlotte; but I am faint with watching—quite sunk and spiritless—Will you excuse me, sir? I'll to my chamber, and try to rest a little.

Stuke. Good thoughts go with you, madam. My bait is taken then, [*Aside.*]—Poor Mrs. Beverley! How my heart grieves to see her thus!

Char. Cure her, and be a friend then.

Stuke. How cure her, madam?

Char. Reclaim my brother.

Stuke. Ay, give him a new creation, or breathe another soul into him. I'll think on't, madam. Advice, I see, is thankless.

Char. Useless I am sure it is, if thro' mistaken friendship, or other motives, you feed his passion with your purse, and sooth it by example. Physicians, to cure fevers, keep from the patient's thirsty lip the cup that would inflame him. You give it to his hands. [*A knocking.*] Hark, sir!——These are

my brother's desperate symptoms——Another creditor.

Stuke. One not so easily got rid of—What, Lewson!

Enter LEWSON.

Lew. Madam, your servant——Yours, sir. I was enquiring for you at your lodgings.

Stuke. This morning! You had business, then?

Lew. You'll call it by another name, perhaps. Where's Mr. Beverley, madam?

Char. We have sent to enquire for him.

Lew. Is he abroad then? He did not use to go out so early.

Char. No, nor stay out so late.

Lew. Is that the case? I am sorry for it. But Mr. Stukely, perhaps, may direct you to him.

Stuke. I have already, sir. But what was your business with me?

Lew. To congratulate you upon your late successes at play. Poor Beverley!——But you are his friend; and there's a comfort in having successful friends.

Stuke. And what am I to understand by this?

Lew. That Beverley's a poor man, with a rich friend; that's all.

Stuke. Your words would mean something, I suppose. Another time, sir, I shall desire an explanation.

Lew. And why not now? I am no dealer in long sentences. A minute or two will do for me.

Stuke. But not for me, sir. I am slow of apprehension, and must have time and privacy. A lady's

presence engages my attention. Another morning I may be found at home.

Lew. Another morning, then, I'll wait upon you.

Stuke. I shall expect you, sir. Madam, your servant. [*Exit* Stukely.

Char. What mean you by this?

Lew. To hint to him that I know him.

Char. How know him? Mere doubt and supposition!

Lew. I shall have proof soon.

Char. And what then? Would you risque your life to be his punisher?

Lew. My life, madam! Don't be afraid. And yet I am happy in your concern for me. But let it content you that I know this Stukely——'Twould be as easy to make him honest as brave.

Char. And what do you intend to do?

Lew. Nothing, till I have proof. Yet my suspicions are well-grounded—But, methinks, madam, I am acting here without authority. Could I have leave to call Mr. Beverley brother, his concerns would be my own. Why will you make my services appear officious?

Char. You know my reasons, and should not press me. But I am cold, you say; and cold I will be, while a poor sister's destitute——My heart bleeds for her; and till I see her sorrows moderated, love has no joys for me.

Lew. Can I be less a friend by being a brother? I would not say an unkind thing—But the pillar of

your house is shaken; prop it with another, and it shall stand firm again. You must comply.

Char. And will, when I have peace within myself. But let us change this subject—Your business here this morning is with my sister. Misfortunes press too hard upon her; yet, till to-day, she has borne them nobly.

Lew. Where is she?

Char. Gone to her chamber. Her spirits failed her.

Lew. I hear her coming. Let what has passed with Stukely be a secret—She has already too much to trouble her.

Enter Mrs. BEVERLEY.

Mrs. Bev. Good morning, sir; I heard your voice, and, as I thought, enquiring for me. Where's Mr. Stukely, Charlotte?

Char. This moment gone—You have been in tears, sister; but here's a friend shall comfort you.

Lew. Or, if I add to your distresses, I'll beg your pardon, madam. The sale of your house and furniture was finished yesterday.

Mrs. Bev. I know it, sir; I know too your generous reason for putting me in mind of it. But you have obliged me too much already.

Lew. There are trifles, madam, which I know you have set a value on, those I have purchased, and will deliver. I have a friend too, that esteems you—He has bought largely, and will call nothing his, till

he has seen you. If a visit to him would not be painful, he has begged it may be this morning.

Mrs. Bev. Not painful in the least. My pain is from the kindness of my friends. Why am I to be obliged beyond the power of return?

Lew. You shall repay us at your own time. I have a coach waiting at the door—Shall we have your company, madam? [*To* Charlotte.

Char. No; my brother may return soon; I'll stay and receive him.

Mrs. Bev. He may want a comforter, perhaps. But don't upbraid him, Charlotte. We sha'n't be absent long. Come, sir, since I must be so obliged.

Lew. 'Tis I that am obliged. An hour, or less, will be sufficient for us. We shall find you at home, madam. [*To* Char. *and exit with Mrs.* Bev.

Char. Certainly. I have but little inclination to appear abroad. Oh, this brother, this brother! to what wretchedness has he reduced us! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Changes to STUKELY's *Lodgings.* *Enter* STUKELY.

Stuke. That Lewson suspects me 'tis too plain. Yet why should he suspect me?—I appear the friend of Beverley as much as he. But I am rich, it seems; and so I am, thanks to another's folly, and my own wisdom. To what use is wisdom, but to take advantage of the weak? This Beverley's my fool; I

cheat him, and he calls me friend. But more business must be done yet——His wife's jewels are unsold; so is the reversion of his uncle's estate: I must have these too. And then there's a treasure above all——I love his wife——Before she knew this Beverley I loved her; but, like a cringing fool, bowed at a distance, while he stepp'd in and won her——Never, never will I forgive him for it. My pride, as well as love, is wounded by this conquest. I must have vengeance. Those hints this morning were well thrown in——Already they have fastened on her. If jealousy should weaken her affections, want may corrupt her virtue——My heart rejoices in the hope——These jewels may do much——He shall demand them of her; which, when mine, shall be converted to special purposes——What now, Bates?

Enter BATES.

Bates. Is it a wonder then to see me? The forces are all in readiness, and only wait for orders. Where's Beverley?

Stuke. At last night's rendezvous, waiting for me. Is Dawson with you?

Bates. Dressed like a nobleman; with money in his pocket, and a set of dice that shall deceive the devil.

Stuke. That fellow has a head to undo a nation; but for the rest, they are such low-manner'd, ill-looking dogs, I wonder Beverley has not suspected them.

Bates. No matter for manners and looks. Do you

supply them with money, and they are gentlemen by profession——The passion of gaming casts such a mist before the eyes, that the nobleman shall be surrounded with sharpers, and imagine himself in the best company.

Stuke. There's that Williams too. It was he, I suppose, that called at Beverley's with the note this morning. What directions did you give him?

Bates. To knock loud, and be clamorous. Did not you see him?

Stuke. No, the fool sneaked off with Jarvis. Had he appeared within doors, as directed, the note had been discharged. I waited there on purpose. I want the women to think well of me; for Lewson's grown suspicious; he told me so himself.

Bates. What answer did you make him?

Stuke. A short one——That I would see him soon, for farther explanation.

Bates. We must take care of him. But what have we to do with Beverley? Dawson and the rest are wondering at you.

Stuke. Why, let them wonder. I have designs above their narrow reach. They see me lend him money, and they stare at me. But they are fools. I want him to believe me beggared by him.

Bates. And what then?

Stuke. Ay, there's the question; but no matter; at night you may know more. He waits for me at Wilson's. I told the women where to find him.

Bates. To what purpose?

Stuke. To save suspicion. It looked friendly, and they thanked me. Old Jarvis was dispatched to him.

Bates. And may intreat him home——

Stuke. No; he expects money from me; but I'll have none. His wife's jewels must go——Women are easy creatures, and refuse nothing where they love. Follow to Wilson's; but be sure he sees you not. You are a man of character, you know; of prudence and discretion. Wait for me in an outer room; I shall have business for you presently.—— Come, sir,

Let drudging fools by honesty grow great;
The shorter road to riches is deceit. [Exeunt.

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Gaming House, with a Table, Box, Dice, &c.
BEVERLEY *discovered sitting.*

Beverley.

WHY, what a world is this! The slave that digs for gold, receives his daily pittance, and sleeps contented; while those for whom he labours, convert their good to mischief, making abundance the means of want. Oh, shame, shame! Had Fortune given me but a little, that little had been still my own. But plenty leads to waste; and shallow streams maintain their currents, while swelling rivers beat down their

banks, and leave their channels empty. What had I to do with play? I wanted nothing. My wishes and my means were equal. The poor followed me with blessings, love scattered roses on my pillow, and morning waked me to delight——Oh, bitter thought, that leads to what I was by what I am! I would forget both——Who's there?

Enter a Waiter.

Wait. A gentleman, sir, enquires for you.

Bev. He might have used less ceremony. Stukely, I suppose?

Wait. No, sir, a stranger.

Bev. Well, shew him in. [*Exit Waiter.*

A messenger from Stukely then; from him that has undone me! yet all in friendship——And now he lends me his little, to bring back fortune to me.

Enter JARVIS.

Jarvis!—Why this intrusion?—Your absence had been kinder.

Jar. I came in duty, sir. If it be troublesome—

Bev. It is——I would be private——hid even from myself. Who sent you hither?

Jar. One that would persuade you home again. My mistress is not well; her tears told me so.

Bev. Go with thy duty there then——"But does "she weep? I am to blame to let her weep." Pr'ythee, begone: I have no business for thee.

Jar. Yes, sir; to lead you from this place. I am

your servant still. Your prosperous fortune blessed my old age. If that has left you, I must not leave you.

Bev. Not leave me! Recall past time, then; or, thro' this sea of storms and darkness, shew me a star to guide me——But what canst thou?

Jar. The little that I can I will. You have been generous to me—I would not offend you, sir—but—

Bev. No. Think'st thou I'd ruin thee too? I have enough of shame already——My wife, my wife! Wouldst thou believe it, Jarvis? I have not seen her all this long night——I who have loved her so, that every hour of absence seemed as a gap in life. But other bonds have held me——Oh, I have played the boy! dropping my counters in the stream, and reaching to redeem them, lost myself. "Why wilt thou "follow misery? Or if thou wilt, go to thy mistress: "she has no guilt to sting her; and therefore may "be comforted."

Jar. For pity's sake, sir!——I have no heart to see this change.

Bev. Nor I to bear it——How speaks the world of me, Jarvis?

Jar. As of a good man dead. Of one, who, walking in a dream, fell down a precipice. The world is sorry for you.

Bev. Ay, and pities me. Says it not so? But I was born to infamy——I'll tell thee what it says; it calls me villain, a treacherous husband, a cruel father, a false brother, one lost to nature and her cha-

rities; or, to say all in one short word, it calls me—Gamester.——Go to thy mistress; I'll see her presently.

Jar. And why not now? Rude people press upon her; loud, bawling creditors; wretches, who know no pity—I met one at the door; he would have seen my mistress: I wanted means of present payment, so promised it to-morrow. But others may be pressing, and she has grief enough already. Your absence hangs too heavy on her.

Bev. Tell her I'll come then. I have a moment's business. But what hast thou to do with my distresses? Thy honesty has left thee poor; and age wants comfort——Keep what thou hast "for cordials," lest between thee and the grave, misery steal in. I have a friend shall counsel me——This is that friend.

Enter STUKELY.

Stuke. How fares it, Beverley? Honest Mr. Jarvis, well met; I hoped to find you here. That viper, Williams! Was it not he that troubled you this morning?

Jar. My mistress heard him then?——I am sorry that she heard him.

Bev. And Jarvis promised payment.

Stuke. That must not be. Tell him I'll satisfy him.

Jar. Will you, sir? Heaven will reward you for't.

Bev. Generous Stukely! Friendship like yours, had it ability like will, would more than balance the wrongs of fortune.

Stuke. You think too kindly of me——Make haste to Williams; his clamours may be rude else. [*To Jar.*

Jar. And my master will go home again—Alas! Sir, we know of hearts there breaking for his absence. [*Exit.*

Bev. Would I were dead!

Stuke. "Or turn'd hermit, counting a string of "beads in a dark cave; or under a weeping willow, "praying for mercy on the wicked." Ha, ha, ha! —Pr'ythee, be a man, and leave dying to disease and old age. Fortune may be ours again; at least we'll try for't.

Bev. No; it has fool'd us on too far.

Stuke. Ay, ruin'd us; and therefore we'll sit down contented. These are the despondings of men without money; but let the shining ore chink in the pocket, and folly turns to wisdom. We are fortune's children——True, she's a fickle mother; but shall we droop because she's peevish?——No; she has smiles in store. And these her frowns are meant to brighten 'em.

Bev. Is this a time for levity? But you are single in the ruin, and therefore may talk lightly of it. With me 'tis complicated misery.

Stuke. You censure me unjustly——I but assumed these spirits to cheer my friend. Heaven knows he wants a comforter.

Bev. What new misfortune?

Stuke. I would have brought you money, but lend-

ers want securities. What's to be done? All that was mine is yours already.

Bev. And there's the double weight that sinks me. I have undone my friend too; one, who to save a drowning wretch, reached out his hand, and perished with him.

Stuke. Have better thoughts.

Bev. Whence are they to proceed? I have nothing left.

Stuke. [*Sighing.*] Then we're indeed undone. What nothing? No moveables, nor useless trinkets? Bawbles locked up in caskets to starve their owners? I have ventured deeply for you.

Bev. Therefore this heart-ache; for I am lost beyond all hope.

Stuke. No; means may be found to save us. Jarvis is rich. Who made him so? This is no time for ceremony.

Bev. And is it for dishonesty? The good old man! Shall I rob him too? My friend would grieve for't. No; let the little that he has buy food and clothing for him.

Stuke. Good morning then. [*Going.*

Bev. So hasty! Why then, good morning.

Stuke. And when we meet again, upbraid me. Say it was I that tempted you. Tell Lewson so; and tell him I have wrong'd you——He has suspicions of me, and will thank you.

Bev. No; we have been companions in a rash voy-

age, and the same storm has wreck'd us both. Mine shall be self-upbraidings.

Stuke. And will they feed us? You deal unkindly by me. I have sold and borrow'd for you, while land or credit lasted; and now, when fortune should be try'd, and my heart whispers me success, I am deserted; turn'd loose to beggary, while you have hoards.

Bev. What hoards? Name 'em, and take 'em.

Stuke. Jewels.

Bev. And shall this thriftless hand seize them too? My poor, poor wife! Must she lose all? I would not wound her so.

Stuke. Nor I, but from necessity. One effort more, and fortune may grow kind. I have unusual hopes.

Bev. Think of some other means then.

Stuke. I have; and you rejected 'em.

Bev. Pr'ythee, let me be a man.

Stuke. Ay, and your friend a poor one. But I have done. And for these trinkets of a woman, why, let her keep 'em to deck out pride with, and shew a laughing world that she has finery to starve in.

Bev. No; she shall yield up all. My friend demands it. But need we have talk'd lightly of her? The jewels that she values are truth and innocence—Those will adorn her ever; and for the rest, she wore 'em for a husband's pride, and to his wants will give 'em. Alas! you know her not. Where shall we meet?

Stuke. No matter. I have chang'd my mind. Leave me to a prison; 'tis the reward of friendship.

Bev. Perish mankind first——Leave you to a prison! No; fallen as you see me, I'm not that wretch. Nor would I change this heart, o'ercharg'd as 'tis with folly and misfortune, for one most prudent and most happy, if callous to a friend's distress.

Stuke. You are too warm.

Bev. In such a cause, not to be warm is to be frozen. Farewell. I'll meet you at your lodgings.

Stuke. Reflect a little. The jewels may be lost. Better not hazard 'em—I was too pressing.

Bev. And I ungrateful. Reflection takes up time. I have no leisure for't. Within an hour expect me.

[*Exit.*

Stuke. The thoughtless, shallow prodigal! We shall have sport at night, then—But hold——The jewels are not ours yet—The lady may refuse 'em—The husband may relent too—'Tis more than probable—I'll write a note to Beverley, and the contents shall spur him to demand 'em——But am I grown this rogue thro' avarice? No; I have warmer motives, love and revenge—Ruin the husband, and the wive's virtue may be bid for. "'Tis of uncertain "value, and sinks or rises in the purchase, as want "or wealth, or passion governs. The poor part "cheaply with it; rich dames, tho' pleased with "selling, will have high prices for't. Your love-"sick girls give it for oaths and lying. But tender "wives, who boast of honour and affections, keep it "against famine—Why, let famine come then; I am "in haste to purchase."

Enter BATES.

Look to your men, Bates; there's money stirring. We meet to-night upon this spot. Hasten, and tell 'em so. Beverley calls upon me at my lodgings, and we return together. Hasten, I say, the rogues will scatter else.

Bates. Not till their leader bids 'em.

Stuke. Come on, then. Give 'em the word and follow me; I must advise with you——This is a day of business. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Changes to BEVERLEY's *Lodgings. Enter* BEVERLEY *and* CHARLOTTE.

Char. Your looks are chang'd too; there's wildness in 'em. My wretched sister! How will it grieve her to see you thus!

Bev. No, no—a little rest will ease me. And for your Lewson's kindness to her, it has my thanks; I have no more to give him.

Char. Yes; a sister and her fortune. I trifle with him, and he complains—My looks, he says, are cold upon him. He thinks too——

Bev. That I have lost your fortune——He dares not think so.

Char. Nor does he—You are too quick at guessing. He cares not if you had. That care is mine—I lent it you to husband, and now I claim it.

Bev. You have suspicions then.

Char. Cure 'em, and give it me.

Bev. To stop a sister's chiding?

Char. To vindicate her brother.

Bev. How if he needs no vindication?

Char. I would fain hope so.

Bev. Ay, would and cannot. Leave it to time, then; 'twill satisfy all doubts.

Char. Mine are already satisfied.

Bev. 'Tis well. And when the subject is renewed, speak to me like a sister, and I will answer like a brother.

Char. To tell me I'm a beggar. Why, tell it now. I that can bear the ruin of those dearer to me, the ruin of a sister and her infant, can bear that too.

Bev. No more of this——you wring my heart.

Char. Would that the misery were all your own! But innocence must suffer——Unthinking rioter! whose home was heaven to him; an angel dwelt there, and a little cherub, that crowned his days with blessings.—How he has lost this heaven to league with devils!

Bev. Forbear, I say; reproaches come too late; they search, but cure not. And for the fortune you demand, we'll talk to-morrow on't; our tempers may be milder.

Char. Or, if 'tis gone, why farewell all. I claimed it for a sister. "She holds my heart in hers; and "every pang she feels tears it in pieces"——But I'll upbraid no more. What Heaven permits, perhaps,

it may ordain; "and sorrow then is sinful." Yet that the husband! father! brother! should be its instruments of vengeance!——'Tis grievous to know that.

Bev. If you're my sister, spare the remembrance—it wounds too deeply. To-morrow shall clear all; and when the worst is known, it may be better than your fears. Comfort my wife; and for the pains of absence, I'll make atonement. The world may yet go well with us.

Char. See where she comes!——Look chearfully upon her——Affections such as hers are prying, and lend those eyes that read the soul.

Enter Mrs. BEVERLEY *and* LEWSON.

Mrs. Bev. My life!

Bev. My love! how fares it? I have been a truant husband.

Mrs. Bev. But we meet now, and that heals all—Doubts and alarms I have had; but in this dear embrace I bury and forget 'em. My friend here [*Pointing to* Lewson] has been indeed a friend. Charlotte, 'tis you must thank him: your brother's thanks and mine are of too little value.

Bev. Yet what we have we'll pay. I thank you, sir, and am obliged. I would say more, but that your goodness to the wife upbraids the husband's follies. Had I been wise, she had not trespassed on your bounty.

Lew. Nor has she trespassed. The little I have done, acceptance overpays.

Char. So friendship thinks——

Mrs. Bev. And double obligations by striving to conceal 'em——We'll talk another time on't——You are too thoughtful, love.

Bev. No, I have reason for these thoughts.

Char. And hatred for the cause—Would you had that too!

Bev. I have——The cause was avarice.

Char. And who the tempter?

Bev. A ruined friend—ruined by too much kindness.

Lew. Ay, worse than ruined; stabbed in his fame, mortally stabbed—riches cann't cure him.

Bev. Or if they could, those I have drained him of. Something of this he hinted in the morning—that Lewson had suspicions of him——Why these suspicions? [*Angrily.*

Lew. At school we knew this Stukely. A cunning; plodding boy he was, sordid and cruel, slow at his task, but quick at shifts and tricking. He schemed out mischief, that others might be punished; and would tell his tale with so much art, that for the lash he merited, rewards and praise were given him. Shew me a boy with such a mind, and time, that ripens manhood in him, shall ripen vice too——I'll prove him, and lay him open to you——Till then be warned——I know him, and therefore shun him.

Bev. As I would those that wrong him.—You are too busy, sir.

Mrs. Bev. No, not too busy——Mistaken, perhaps——That had been milder.

Lew. No matter, madam. I can bear this, and praise the heart that prompts it—Pity such friendship should be so placed!

Bev. Again, sir! But I'll bear too—You wrong him, Lewson, and will be sorry for't.

Char. Ay, when 'tis proved he wrongs him. The world is full of hypocrites.

Bev. And Stukely one—so you would infer, I think.——I'll hear no more of this—my heart aches for him——I have undone him.

Lew. The world says otherwise.

Bev. The world is false then——I have business with you, love. [*To Mrs.* Bev.] We'll leave 'em to their rancour. [*Going.*

Char. No; we shall find room within for't.——Come this way, sir. [*To* Lew.

Lew. Another time my friend will thank me; that time is hastening too. [*Exeunt* Lew. *and* Char.

Bev. They hurt me beyond bearing——Is Stukely false? Then honesty has left us! 'Twere sinning against Heaven to think so.

Mrs. Bev. I never doubted him.

Bev. No; you are charity. Meekness and ever-during patience live in that heart, and love that knows no change.——Why did I ruin you?

Mrs. Bev. You have not ruined me. I have no

wants when you are present, nor wishes in your absence but to be blest with your return. Be but resign'd to what has happened, and I am rich beyond the dreams of avarice.

Bev. My generous girl!——But memory will be busy; still crowding on my thoughts, to sour the present by the past. I have another pang too.

Mrs. Bev. Tell it, and let me cure it.

Bev. That friend——that generous friend, whose fame they have traduced——I have undone him too. While he had means he lent me largely; and now a prison must be his portion.

Mrs. Bev. No; I hope otherwise.

Bev. To hope must be to act. The charitable wish feeds not the hungry——Something must be done.

Mrs. Bev. What?

Bev. In bitterness of heart he told me, just now he told me, I had undone him. Could I hear that, and think of happiness? No; I have disclaimed it, while he is miserable.

Mrs. Bev. The world may mend with us, and then we may be grateful. There's comfort in that hope.

Bev. Ay; 'tis the sick man's cordial, his promised cure; while in preparing it the patient dies.——What now?

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. A letter, sir. [*Delivers it, and exit.*

Bev. The hand is Stukely's.

[*Opens it, and reads it to himself.*

Mrs. Bev. And brings good news—at least I'll hope so——What says he, love?

Bev. Why this—too much for patience. Yet he directs me to conceal it from you. [*Reads.*] 'Let your haste to see me be the only proof of your esteem for me. I have determined, since we parted, to bid adieu to England; choosing rather to forsake my country, than owe my freedom in it to the means we talked of. Keep this a secret at home, and hasten to the ruined R. STUKELY.'
Ruined by friendship!——I must relieve or follow him.

Mrs. Bev. Follow him, did you say? Then I am lost indeed!

Bev. O this infernal vice! how has it sunk me! A vice, whose highest joy was poor to my domestic happiness. Yet how have I pursued it! turned all my comforts to bitterest pangs, and all my smiles to tears. Damn'd, damn'd infatuation!

Mrs. Bev. Be cool, my life! What are the means the letter talks of? Have you—have I those means? Tell me, and ease me. I have no life while you are wretched.

Bev. No, no; it must not be. 'Tis I alone have sinned; 'tis I alone must suffer. You shall reserve those means to keep my child and his wronged mother from want and wretchedness.

Mrs. Bev. What means?

Bev. I came to rob you of 'em—but cannot—dare

not——Those jewels are your sole support——I should be more than monster to request 'em.

Mrs. Bev. My jewels! Trifles, not worth the speaking of, if weighed against a husband's peace; but let 'em purchase that, and the world's wealth is of less value.

Bev. Amazing goodness! How little do I seem before such virtues!

Mrs. Bev. No more, my love. I kept 'em till occasion called to use 'em; now is the occasion, and I'll resign 'em cheerfully.

Bev. Why we'll be rich in love then. "But this "excess of kindness melts me. Yet for a friend one "would do much—He has denied me nothing."

Mrs. Bev. Come to my closet—But let him manage wisely. We have no more to give him.

Bev. Where learnt my love this excellence? "'Tis "Heaven's own teaching: that Heaven, which to an "angel's form has given a mind more lovely." I am unworthy of you, but will deserve you better.

Henceforth my follies and neglects shall cease,
And all to come be penitence and peace;
Vice shall no more attract me with her charms,
Nor pleasure reach me, but in these dear arms.

[Exeunt.

ACT III. SCENE I.

STUKELY's *Lodgings.* *Enter* STUKELY *and* BATES.

Stukely.

So runs the world, Bates. Fools are the natural prey of knaves; Nature designed them so, when she made lambs for wolves. The laws that fear and policy have framed, Nature declaims: she knows but two, and those are force and cunning. The nobler law is force; but then there's danger in't; while cunning, like a skilful miner, works safely and unseen.

Bates. And therefore wisely. Force must have nerves and sinews; cunning wants neither. The dwarf that has it shall trip the giant's heels up.

Stuke. And bind him to the ground. Why, we'll erect a shrine for Nature, and be her oracles. Conscience is weakness; fear made it, and fear maintains it. The dread of shame, inward reproaches, and fictitious burnings swell out the phantom. Nature knows none of this; her laws are freedom.

Bates. Sound doctrine, and well delivered!

Stuke. We are sincere, too, and practise what we teach. Let the grave pedant say as much.—But now to business—The jewels are disposed of: and Beverley again worth money. He waits to count his gold out, and then comes hither. If my design succeeds, this night we finish with him—Go to your lodgings,

and be busy—You understand conveyances, and make ruin sure.

Bates. Better stop here. The sale of this reversion may be talked of—There's danger in it.

Stuke. No, 'tis the mark I aim at. We'll thrive and laugh. You are the purchaser, and there's the payment. [*Giving a pocket-book.*] He thinks you rich; and so you shall be. Enquire for titles, and deal hardly; 'twill look like honesty.

Bates. How if he suspects us.

Stuke. Leave it to me. I study hearts, and when to work upon them. Go to your lodgings; and if we come, be busy over papers. Talk of a thoughtless age, of gaming and extravagance; you have a face for't.

Bates. A feeling too that would avoid it. We push too far; but I have cautioned you. If it ends ill, you'll think of me—and so, adieu. [*Exit.*

Stuke. This fellow sins by halves; his fears are conscience to him. I'll turn these fears to use. Rogues that dread shame, will still be greater rogues to hide their guilt—This shall be thought of. Lewson grows troublesome—We must get rid of him—He knows too much. I have a tale for Beverley; part of it truth, too—He shall call Lewson to account—If it succeeds, 'tis well; if not, we must try other means—But here he comes—I must dissemble.

Enter BEVERLEY.

Look to the door there!—[*In a seeming fright.*]—My friend!—I thought of other visitors.

Bev. No; these shall guard you from them—[*Offering notes.*] Take them, and use them cautiously—The world deals hardly by us.

Stuke. And shall I leave you destitute? No: your wants are the greatest. Another climate may treat me kinder. The shelter of to-night takes me from this.

Bev. Let these be your support then—Yet is there need of parting? I may have means again; we'll share them, and live wisely.

Stuke. No: I should tempt you on. Habit is nature in me: ruin cann't cure it. Even now I would be gaming. Taught by experience as I am, and knowing this poor sum is all that's left us, I am for venturing still—And say I am to blame—Yet will this little supply our wants? No, we must put it out to usury. Whether 'tis madness in me, or some restless impulse of good fortune, I yet am ignorant; but——

Bev. Take it, and succeed then. I'll try no more.

Stuke. 'Tis surely impulse; it pleads so strongly—But you are cold——We'll e'en part here then. And for this last reserve, keep it for better uses; I'll have none on't. I thank you though, and will seek fortune singly—One thing I had forgot——

Bev. What is it?

Stuke. Perhaps, 'twere best forgotten. But I am open in my nature, and zealous for the honour of my friend——Lewson speaks freely of you.

Bev. Of you, I know he does.

Stuke. I can forgive him for't; but, for my friend, I'm angry.

Bev. What says he of me?

Stuke. That Charlotte's fortune is embezzled—He talks on't loudly.

Bev. He shall be silenced, then—How heard you of it?

Stuke. From many. He questioned Bates about it. You must account with him, he says.

Bev. Or he with me——and soon, too.

Stuke. Speak mildly to him. Cautions are best.

Bev. I'll think on't—But whither go you?

Stuke. From poverty and prisons—No matter whither. If fortune changes you may hear from me.

Bev. May these be prosperous, then. [*Offering the notes, which he refuses.*] Nay, they are yours——I have sworn it, and will have nothing—Take them and use them.

Stuke. Singly I will not——My cares are for my friend; for his lost fortune and ruined family. All separate interests I disclaim. Together we have fallen; together we must rise. My heart, my honour, and affections, all will have it so.

Bev. I am weary of being fooled.

Stuke. And so am I——Here let us part, then——These bodings of good-fortune shall all be stifled; call them folly, and forget them——This one embrace, and then farewell. [*Offering to embrace.*

Bev. No; stay a moment——How my poor heart's

distracted! I have these bodings too; but whether caught from you, or prompted by my good or evil genius, I know not—The trial shall determine—And yet, my wife.

Stuke. Ay, ay, she'll chide.

Bev. No; my chidings are all here.

[*Pointing to his heart.*

Stuke. I'll not persuade you.

Bev. I am persuaded; by reason too; the strongest reason; Necessity. Oh, could I but regain the height I have fallen from, Heaven should forsake me in my latest hour, if I again mixed in these scenes, or sacrificed the husband's peace, his joy and best affections, to avarice and infamy.

Stuke. I have resolved like you; and since our motives are so honest, why should we fear success?

Bev. Come on, then—Where shall we meet?

Stuke. At Wilson's—Yet if it hurts you, leave me: I have misled you often.

Bev. We have misled each other—But come! Fortune is fickle, and may be tired with plaguing us—— There let us rest our hopes.

Stuke. Yet think a little——

Bev. I cannot——thinking but distracts me.

When desperation leads, all thoughts are vain;
Reason would lose what rashness may obtain.

[Exeunt.

SCENE III.

Changes to BEVERLEY's *Lodgings. Enter Mrs.* BEVERLEY, *and* CHARLOTTE.

Char. 'Twas all a scheme, a mean one; unworthy of my brother.

Mrs. Bev. No, I am sure it was not—Stukely is honest too; I know he is—This madness has undone them both.

Char. My brother irrecoverable—You are too spiritless a wife—A mournful tale, mixed with a few kind words, will steal away your soul. The world's too subtle for such goodness. Had I been by, *he* should have asked your life sooner than those jewels.

Mrs. Bev. He should have had it, then. [*Warmly.*] I live but to oblige him. She who can love, and is beloved like me, will do as much. Men have done more for mistresses, and women for a base deluder: and shall a wife do less? Your chidings hurt me, Charlotte.

Char. And come too late; they might have saved you else. How could he use you so?

Mrs. Bev. 'Twas friendship did it. His heart was breaking for a friend.

Char. The friend that has betrayed him.

Mrs. Bev. Pr'ythee don't think so.

Char. To-morrow he accounts with me.

Mrs. Bev. And fairly—I will not doubt it.

Char. Unless a friend has wanted——I have no

patience——Sister! sister! we are bound to curse this friend.

Mrs. Bev. My Beverley speaks nobly of him.

Char. And Lewson truly—But I displease you with this talk.——To-morrow will instruct us.

Mrs. Bev. Stay till it comes then——I would not think so hardly.

Char. Nor I, but from conviction——Yet we have hope of better days. My uncle is infirm, and of an age that threatens hourly——Or if he lives, you never have offended him; and for distresses so unmerited he will have pity.

Mrs. Bev. I know it, and am cheerful. We have no more to lose; and for what's gone, if it brings prudence home, the purchase was well made.

Char. My Lewson will be kind too. While he and I have life and means, you shall divide with us—And see, he's here.

Enter LEWSON.

We were just speaking of you.

Lew. 'Tis best to interrupt you then. Few characters will bear a scrutiny; and where the bad outweighs the good, he's safest that's least talked of. What say you, madam? [*To* Charlotte.

Char. That I hate scandal, though a woman——therefore talk seldom of you.

Mrs. Bev. Or, with more truth, that, though a woman, she loves to praise——Therefore talks always of you. I'll leave you to decide it. [*Exit.*

Lew. How good and amiable! I came to talk in private with you; of matters that concern you.

Char. What matters?

Lew. First answer me sincerely to what I ask.

Char. I will——But you alarm me.

Lew. I am too grave, perhaps; but be assured of this, I have no news that troubles me, and therefore should not you.

Char. I am easy then—Propose your question.

Lew. 'Tis now a tedious twelve-month, since, with an open and kind heart you said you loved me.

Char. So tedious, did you say?

Lew. And when in consequence of such sweet words, I pressed for marriage, you gave a voluntary promise that you would live for me.

Char. You think me changed, then? [*Angrily.*

Lew. I did not say so. A thousand times I have pressed for the performance of this promise: but private cares, a brother's and a sister's ruin, were reasons for delaying it.

Char. I had no other reasons.——Where will this end?

Lew. It shall end presently.

Char. Go on, sir.

Lew. A promise, such as this, given freely, not extorted, the world thinks binding; but I think otherwise.

Char. And would release me from it?

Lew. You are too impatient, madam.

Char. Cool, sir—quite cool—Pray go on.

Lew. Time and a near acquaintance with my faults may have brought change—if it be so; or for a moment, if you have wished this promise were unmade, here I acquit you of it——This is my question then; and with such plainness as I ask it, I shall entreat an answer. Have you repented of this promise?

Char. Stay, sir. The man that can suspect me, shall find me changed——Why am I doubted?

Lew. My doubts are of myself. I have my faults, and you have observation. If from my temper, my words or actions, you have conceived a thought against me, or even a wish for separation, all that has passed is nothing.

Char. You startle me—But tell me—I must be answered first. Is it from honour you speak this? Or do you wish me changed?

Lew. Heaven knows I do not. Life and my Charlotte are so connected, that to lose one, were loss of both. Yet for a promise, though given in love, and meant for binding; if time or accident, or reason should change opinion—with me that promise has no force.

Char. Why, now I'll answer you. Your doubts are prophecies——I am really changed.

Lew. Indeed!

Char. I could torment you now, as you have me; but it is not in my nature.——That I am chang'd, I own: for what at first was inclination, is now grown reason in me; and from that reason, had I the world; nay, were I poorer than the poorest, and you too

wanting bread, with but a hovel to invite me to—I would be yours, and happy.

Lew. My kindest Charlotte! [*Taking her hand.*] Thanks are too poor for this—and words too weak! But if we love so, why should our union be delayed?

Char. For happier times. The present are too wretched.

Lew. I may have reasons that press it now.

Char. What reasons?

Lew. The strongest reasons; unanswerable ones.

Char. Be quick and name them.

Lew. No, madam; I am bound in honour to make conditions first——I am bound by inclination too. This sweet profusion of kind words pains while it pleases. I dread the losing you.

Char. Astonishment! what mean you?

Lew. First promise, that to-morrow, or the next day, you will be mine for ever.

Char. I do——though misery should succeed.

Lew. Thus then I seize you! And with you every joy on this side Heaven!

Char. And thus I seal my promise. [*Embracing him.* Now, sir, your secret.

Lew. Your fortune's lost.

Char. My fortune lost!——I'll study to be humble then. But was my promise claimed for this? How nobly generous! Where learned you this sad news?

Lew. From Bates, Stukely's prime agent. I have

obliged him, and he's grateful—He told it me in friendship, to warn me from my Charlotte.

Char. 'Twas honest in him, and I'll esteem him for't.

Lew. He knows much more than he has told.

Char. For me it is enough. And for your generous love, I thank you from my soul. If you'd oblige me more, give me a little time.

Lew. Why time? It robs us of our happiness.

Char. I have a task to learn first. The little pride this fortune gave me must be subdued. Once we were equal; and might have met obliging and obliged. But now 'tis otherwise; and for a life of obligations, I have not learned to bear it.

Lew. Mine is that life. You are too noble.

Char. Leave me to think on't.

Lew. To-morrow then you'll fix my happiness?

Char. All that I can, I will.

Lew. It must be so; we live but for each other. Keep what you know a secret; and when we meet to-morrow, more may be known.——Farewell. [*Exit.*

Char. My poor, poor sister! how would this wound her! But I'll conceal it, and speak comfort to her.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

Changes to a Room in the Gaming-House. Enter BEVERLEY *and* STUKELY.

Bev. Whither would you lead me? [*Angrily.*

Stuke. Where we may vent our curses.

Bev. Ay, on yourself, and those damned counsels that have destroyed me. A thousand fiends were in that bosom, and all let loose to tempt me—I had resisted else.

Stuke. Go on, sir—I have deserved this from you.

Bev. And curses everlasting——Time is too scanty for them——

Stuke. What have I done?

Bev. What the arch-devil of old did—soothed with false hopes for certain ruin.

Stuke. Myself unhurt; nay, pleased at your destruction—So your words mean. Why, tell it to the world. I am too poor to find a friend in't.

Bev. A friend! What's he? I had a friend.

Stuke. And have one still.

Bev. Ay; I'll tell you of this friend. He found me happiest of the happy. Fortune and honour crowned me; and love and peace lived in my heart. One spark of folly lurked there; that too he found; and by deceitful breath blew into flames that have consumed me. This friend were you to me.

Stuke. A little more, perhaps—The friend who gave his all to save you; and not succeeding, chose ruin with you. But no matter, I have undone you and am a villain.

Bev. No; I think not—The villains are within.

Stuke. What villains?

Bev. Dawson and the rest—We have been dupes to sharpers.

Stuke. How know you this? I have had doubts as well as you; yet still as fortune changed I blushed at my own thoughts.——But you have proof, perhaps.

Bev. Ay, damned ones. Repeated losses—Night after night, and no reverse—Chance has no hand in this.

Stuke. I think more charitably; yet I am peevish in my nature, and apt to doubt—The world speaks fairly of this Dawson, so it does of the rest. We have watched them closely too. But 'tis a right usurped by losers, to think the winners knaves—We'll have more manhood in us.

Bev. I know not what to think.——This night has stung me to the quick—Blasted my reputation too—I have bound my honour to these vipers; played meanly upon credit, 'till I tired them; and now they shun me to rifle one another. What's to be done?

Stuke. Nothing. My counsels have been fatal.

Bev. By Heaven I'll not survive this shame—Traitor! 'tis you have brought it on me. [*Taking hold of him.*] Shew me the means to save me, or I'll commit a murder here, and next upon myself.

Stuke. Why do it then, and rid me of ingratitude.

Bev. Pr'ythee forgive this language—I speak I know not what—Rage and despair are in my heart, and hurry me to madness. My home is horror to me—I'll not return to it. Speak quickly; tell me, if in this wreck of fortune, one hope remains? Name it, and be my oracle.

Stuke. To vent your curses on—You have bestowed them liberally. Take your own counsel; and should a desperate hope present itself, 'twill suit your desperate fortune. I'll not advise you.

Bev. What hope? By Heaven I'll catch at it, however desperate. I am so sunk in misery, it cannot lay me lower.

Stuke. You have an uncle.

Bev. Ay, what of him?

Stuke. Old men live long by temperance; while their heirs starve on expectation.

Bev. What mean you?

Stuke. That the reversion of his estate is yours; and will bring money to pay debts with—Nay more, it may retrieve what's past.

Bev. Or leave my child a beggar.

Stuke. And what's his father? A dishonourable one; engaged for sums he cannot pay——That should be thought of.

Bev. It is my shame—The poison that inflames me. Where shall we go? To whom? I'm impatient till all's lost.

Stuke. All may be your's again—Your man is Bates—He has large funds at his command, and will deal justly by you.

Bev. I am resolved—Tell them within we'll meet them presently; and with full purses, too——Come, follow me.

Stuke. No. I'll have no hand in this; nor do I counsel it—Use your discretion, and act from that. You'll find me at my lodgings.

Bev. *Succeed what will, this night I'll dare the worst.*
'Tis loss of fear to be completely curs'd. [Exit.

Stuke. Why, lose it then for ever——Fear is the mind's worst evil; and 'tis a friendly office to drive it from the bosom—Thus far has fortune crowned me—Yet Beverley is rich; rich in his wife's best treasure, her honour and affections. I would supplant him there too. But 'tis the curse of thinking minds to raise up difficulties. Fools only conquer women. Fearless of dangers which they see not, they press on boldly, and by persisting, prosper. Yet may a tale of art do much——Charlotte is sometimes absent. The seeds of jealousy are sown already. If I mistake not, they have taken root too. Now is the time to ripen them, and reap the harvest. The softest of her sex, if wronged in love, or thinking that she's wronged, becomes a tygress in revenge—I'll instantly to Beverley's——No matter for the danger——When beauty leads us on, 'tis indiscretion to reflect, and cowardice to doubt. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

Changes to BEVERLEY's *Lodgings. Enter Mrs.* BEVERLEY *and* LUCY.

Mrs. Bev. Did Charlotte tell you any thing?

Lucy. No, madam.

Mrs. Bev. She look'd confused, methought; said she

had business with her Lewson; which, when I pressed to know, tears only were her answer.

Lucy. She seemed in haste, too—Yet her return may bring you comfort.

Mrs. Bev. No, my kind girl; I was not born for't—But why do I distress thee? Thy sympathizing heart bleeds for the ills of others—What pity that thy mistress cann't reward thee! But there's a Power above, that sees, and will remember all. [*Knocking.*] "Pr'ythee sooth me with the song thou sungest last "night. It suits this change of fortune; and there's "a melancholy in't that pleases me.

"*Lucy.* I fear it hurts you, madam. Your good-"ness, too, draws tears from me—But I'll dry them, "and obey you.

SONG.

"*When Damon languish'd at my feet,*
"*And I believ'd him true,*
"*The moments of delight how sweet!*
"*But, ah! how swift they flew!*
"*The sunny hill, the flow'ry vale,*
"*The garden and the grove,*
"*Have echo'd to his ardent tale,*
"*And vows of endless love.*

"*The conquest gain'd, he left his prize,*
"*He left her to complain,*
"*To talk of joy with weeping eyes,*
"*And measure time by pain.*

" *But Heav'n will take the mourner's part,*
" *In pity to despair;*
" *And the last sigh that rends the heart,*
" *Shall waft the spirit there.*

" *Mrs. Bev.* I thank thee, Lucy; I thank Heaven " too, my griefs are none of these. Yet Stukely " deals in hints; he talks of rumours; I'll urge him " to speak plainly."——Hark! there's some one entering.

Lucy. Perhaps 'tis my master, madam. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Bev. Let him be well too, and I am satisfied. [*Goes to the door and listens.*] No, 'tis another's voice; his had been music to me. Who is it, Lucy?

Re-enter LUCY *with* STUKELY.

Lucy. Mr. Stukely, madam. [*Exit.*

Stuke. To meet you thus alone, madam, was what I wished. Unseasonable visits, when friendship warrants them, need no excuse—therefore I make none.

Mrs. Bev. What mean you, sir? And where is your friend?

Stuke. Men may have secrets, madam, which their best friends are not admitted to. We parted in the morning, not soon to meet again.

Mrs. Bev. You mean to leave us then; to leave your country too. I am no stranger to your reasons, and pity your misfortunes.

Stuke. Your pity has undone you. Could Beverley do this? That letter was a false one; a mean

contrivance to rob you of your jewels——I wrote it not.

Mrs. Bev. Impossible! Whence came it then?

Stuke. Wrong'd as I am, madam, I must speak plainly.

Mrs. Bev. Do so, and ease me. Your hints have troubled me. Reports, you say, are stirring—Reports of whom? You wished me not to credit them. What, sir, are these reports?

Stuke. I thought them slander, madam; and cautioned you in friendship, lest from officious tongues the tale had reached you with double aggravation.

Mrs. Bev. Proceed, sir.

Stuke. It is a debt due to my fame; due to an injured wife too——We are both injured.

Mrs. Bev. How injured? And who has injured us?

Stuke. My friend, your husband.

Mrs. Bev. You would resent for both then——But know, sir, my injuries are my own, and do not need a champion.

Stuke. Be not too hasty, madam: I come not in resentment, but for acquittance. You thought me poor; and to the feign'd distresses of a friend gave up your jewels.

Mrs. Bev. I gave them to a husband.

Stuke. Who gave them to a——

Mrs. Bev. What, whom did he give them to?

Stuke. A mistress.

Mrs. Bev. No, on my life he did not.

Stuke. Himself confessed it, with curses on her avarice.

Mrs. Bev. I'll not believe it—He has no mistress; or if he has, why is it told to me?

Stuke. To guard you against insults. He told me, that, to move you to compliance, he forged that letter, pretending I was ruin'd, ruin'd by him too. The fraud succeeded; and what a trusting wife bestowed in pity, was lavished on a wanton.

Mrs. Bev. Then I am lost indeed! and my afflictions are too powerful for me. His follies I have borne without upbraiding, and saw the approach of poverty without a tear——My affections, my strong affections, supported me through every trial.

Stuke. Be patient, madam.

Mrs. Bev. Patient! The barbarous, ungrateful man! And does he think that the tenderness of my heart is his best security for wounding it? But he shall find that injuries such as these can arm my weakness for vengeance and redress.

Stuke. Ha! then I may succeed. [*Aside.*] Redress is in your power?

Mrs. Bev. What redress?

Stuke. Forgive me, madam, if, in my zeal to serve you, I hazard your displeasure. Think of your wretched state. Already want surrounds you—Is it in patience to bear that? To see your helpless little one robbed of his birthright? A sister, too, with unavailing tears lamenting her lost fortune? No com-

fort left you, but ineffectual pity from the few, outweigh'd by insults from the many.

Mrs. Bev. Am I so lost a creature?——Well, sir, my redress?

Stuke. To be resolv'd is to secure it. The marriage vow, once violated, is, in the sight of Heaven, dissolved—Start not, but hear me. 'Tis now the summer of your youth; time has not cropt the roses from your cheek, tho' sorrow long has washed them ——Then use your beauty wisely, and, freed by injuries, fly from the cruellest of men for shelter with the kindest.

Mrs. Bev. And who is he?

Stuke. A friend to the unfortunate; a bold one too, who, while the storm is bursting on your brow, and lightning flashing from your eyes, dares tell you that he loves you.

Mrs. Bev. Would that these eyes had Heaven's own lightning, that, with a look, thus I might blast thee! Am I then fallen so low? Has poverty so humbled me, that I should listen to a hellish offer, and sell my soul for bread? Oh, villain, villain!——But now I know thee, and thank thee for the knowledge.

Stuke. If you are wise, you shall have cause to thank me.

Mrs. Bev. An injured husband too, shall thank thee.

Stuke. Yet know, proud woman, I have a heart as stubborn as your own; as haughty and imperious; and as it loves, so can it hate

Mrs. Bev. Mean, despicable villain! I scorn thee and thy threats. Was it for this that Beverley was false? that his too credulous wife should, in despair and vengeance, give up her honour to a wretch? But he shall know it, and vengeance shall be his.

Stuke. Why send him for defiance then. Tell him I love his wife; but that a worthless husband forbids our union. I'll make a widow of you, and court you honourably.

Mrs. Bev. Oh, coward, coward! thy soul will shrink at him. Yet, in the thought of what may happen, I feel a woman's fears. Keep thy own secret, and begone. Who's there?

Enter LUCY.

Your absence, sir, would please me.

Stuke. I'll not offend you, madam.

[*Exit* Stukely *with* Lucy,

Mrs. Bev. Why opens not the earth to swallow such a monster? Be conscience, then, his punisher, till Heaven, in mercy, gives him penitence, or dooms him in his justice.

Re-enter LUCY.

Come to my chamber, Lucy; I have a tale to tell thee, shall make thee weep for thy poor mistress.

Yet Heaven the guiltless sufferer regards;
And whom it most afflicts, it most rewards. [Exeunt.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

BEVERLEY's *Lodgings.* *Enter Mrs.* BEVERLEY, CHARLOTTE, *and* LEWSON.

Charlotte.

THE smooth-tongu'd hypocrite!

Lew. But we have found him, and will requite him ——Be cheerful, madam; [*To Mrs.* Bev.] and for the insults of this ruffian you shall have ample retribution.

Mrs. Bev. But not by violence——Remember, you have sworn it; I had been silent else.

Lew. You need not doubt me; I shall be cool as patience.

Mrs. Bev. See him to-morrow then.

Lew. And why not now? By Heaven, the veriest worm that crawls is made of braver spirit than this Stukely——Yet, for my promise, I'll deal gently with him—I mean to watch his looks—From those, and from his answers to my charge, much may be learnt. Next I'll to Bates, and sift him to the bottom: if I fail there, the gang is numerous, and for a bribe will each betray the other——Good night; I'll lose no time. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Bev. These boisterous spirits, how they wound me! But reasoning is in vain. Come, Charlotte, we'll to our usual watch. The night grows late.

Char. I am fearful of events; yet pleased——To-morrow may relieve us. [*Going.*

Enter JARVIS.

How now, good Jarvis?

Jar. I have heard ill news, madam.

Mrs. Bev. What news? Speak quickly.

Jar. Men are not what they seem. I fear me Mr. Stukely is dishonest.

Char. We know it, Jarvis. But what's your news?

Jar. That there's an action against my master, at his friend's suit.

Mrs. Bev. Oh, villain, villain! 'twas this he threatened then. Run to that den of robbers, Wilson's—Your master may be there. Entreat him home, good Jarvis. Say I have business with him—But tell him not of Stukely—It may provoke him to revenge—— Haste, haste, good Jarvis. [*Exit* Jarvis.

Char. This minister of hell! Oh, I could tear him piece-meal!———

Mrs. Bev. I am sick of such a world——Yet Heaven is just; and, in its own good time, will hurl destruction on such monsters. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Changes to STUKELY's *Lodgings. Enter* STUKELY *and* BATES *meeting.*

Bates. Where have you been?

Stuke. Fooling my time away; playing my tricks, like a tame monkey, to entertain a woman—No mat-

ter where——I have been vexed and disappointed. Tell me of Beverley; how bore he his last shock?

Bates. Like one (so Dawson says) whose senses had been numb'd with misery. When all was lost, he fixed his eyes upon the ground, and stood some time, with folded arms, stupid and motionless; then snatching his sword, that hung against the wainscot, he sat him down, and with a look of fix'd attention, drew figures on the floor. At last, he started up, look'd wild, and trembled; and, like a woman seized with her sex's fits, laughed out aloud, while the tears trickled down his face—so left the room.

Stuke. Why, this was madness.

Bates. The madness of despair.

Stuke. We must confine him then. A prison would do well. [*A knocking at the door.*] Hark! that knocking may be his. Go that way down. [*Exit* Bates.]—Who's there?

Enter LEWSON.

Lew. An enemy—an open and avowed one.

Stuke. Why am I thus broke in upon? This house is mine, sir; and should protect me from insult and ill-manners.

Lew. Guilt has no place of sanctuary; wherever found, 'tis virtue's lawful game. The fox's hold and tyger's den are no security against the hunter.

Stuke. Your business, sir?

Lew. To tell you that I know you——Why this confusion in? That look of guilt and terror? Is Be-

verley awake; or has his wife told tales? The man that dares like you, should have a soul to justify his deeds, and courage to confront accusers: not, with a coward's fear, to shrink beneath reproof.

Stuke. Who waits there? [*Aloud, and in confusion.*

Lew. By Heaven, he dies that interrupts us. [*Shutting the door.*] You should have weighed your strength, sir; and then, instead of climbing to high fortune, the world had marked you for what you are, a little paltry villain.

Stuke. You think I fear you.

Lew. I know you fear me. This is to prove it. [*Pulls him by the sleeve.*] You wanted privacy—A lady's presence took up your attention——Now we are alone, sir. Why, what a wretch! [*Flings him from him.*] The vilest insect in creation will turn when trampled on; yet has this thing undone a man—by cunning and mean arts undone him. But we have found you, sir; trac'd you through all your labyrinths. If you would save yourself, fall to confession: no mercy will be shewn else.

Stuke. First prove me what you think me—till then, your threatenings are in vain——And for this insult, vengeance may yet be mine.

Lew. Infamous coward! why, take it now then—[*Draws, and* Stukely *retires.*] Alas, I pity thee!——Yet that a wretch like this should overcome a Beverley! It fills me with astonishment!——A wretch, so mean of soul, that even desperation cannot animate

him to look upon an enemy. You should not have thus soar'd, sir, unless, like others of your black profession, you had a sword to keep the fools in awe, your villany has ruin'd.

Stuke. Villany! 'Twere best to curb this licence of your tongue; for know, sir, while there are laws, this outrage on my reputation will not be borne with.

Lew. Laws! Dar'st thou seek shelter from the laws, those laws which thou and thy infernal crew live in the constant violation of? Talk'st thou of reputation too, when, under friendship's sacred name, thou hast betrayed, robbed, and destroyed?

Stuke. Ay, rail at gaming; 'tis a rich topic, and affords noble declamation——Go, preach against it in the city: you'll find a congregation in every tavern. If they should laugh at you, fly to my lord, and sermonize it there: he'll thank you, and reform.

Lew. And will example sanctify a vice? No, wretch; the custom of my lord, or of the cit that apes him, cannot excuse a breach of law, or make the gamester's calling reputable.

Stuke. Rail on, I say——But is this zeal for beggared Beverley? Is it for him that I am treated thus? No; he and his wife might both have groaned in prison, had but the sister's fortune escaped the wreck, to have rewarded the disinterested love of honest Mr. Lewson.

Lew. How I detest thee for the thought! But thou

art lost to every human feeling. Yet let me tell thee, and may it wring thy heart, that tho' my friend is ruined by thy snares, thou hast unknowingly been kind to me.

Stuke. Have I? It was, indeed, unknowingly.

Lew. Thou hast assisted me in love; given me the merit that I wanted; since, but for thee, my Charlotte had not known 'twas her dear self I sigh'd for, and not her fortune.

Stuke. Thank me, and take her then.

Lew. And, as a brother to poor Beverley, I will pursue the robber that has stripped him, and snatch him from his gripe.

Stuke. Then know, imprudent man, he is within my gripe; and should my friendship for him be slandered once again, the hand that has supplied him shall fall and crush him.

Lew. Why, now there's a spirit in thee! This is indeed to be a villain! But I shall reach thee yet—Fly where thou wilt, my vengeance shall pursue thee ——And Beverley shall yet be sav'd; be sav'd from thee, thou monster! nor owe his rescue to his wife's dishonour. [*Exit.*

Stuke. [*Pausing.*] Then ruin has enclosed me.—Curse on my coward heart! I would be bravely villanous; but 'tis my nature to shrink at danger, and he has found me. Yet fear brings caution, and that security——More mischief must be done to hide the past——Look to yourself, officious Lewson—there may be danger stirring——How now, Bates?

Enter BATES.

Bates. What is the matter? 'Twas Lewson, and not Beverley, that left you—I heard him loud—You seem alarmed too.

Stuke. Ay, and with reason——We are discovered.

Bates. I feared as much; and therefore cautioned you. But you were peremptory.

Stuke. Thus fools talk ever; spending their idle breath on what is past, and trembling at the future. We must be active. Beverley, at worst, is but suspicious; but Lewson's genius, and his hate to me, will lay all open. Means must be found to stop him.

Bates. What means?

Stuke. Dispatch him——Nay, start not——Desperate occasions call for desperate deeds——We live but by his death.

Bates. You cannot mean it?

Stuke. I do, by Heaven.

Bates. Good night, then. [*Going.*

Stuke. Stay. I must be heard, then answered. Perhaps the motion was too sudden; and human weakness starts at murder, tho' strong necessity compels it. I have thought long of this; and my first feelings were like yours; a foolish conscience awed me, which soon I conquered. The man that would undo me, Nature cries out, undo. Brutes know their foes by instinct; and where superior force is given, they use it for destruction. Shall man do less? Lewson pursues us to our ruin; and shall we, with the

means to crush him, fly from our hunter, or turn and tear him? 'Tis folly even to hesitate.

Bates. He has obliged me, and I dare not.

Stuke. Why, live to shame then, to beggary and punishment. You would be privy to the deed, yet want the soul to act it. Nay, more, had my designs been levelled at his fortune, you had stepped in the foremost——And what is life without its comforts? Those you would rob him of, and by a lingering death add cruelty to murder. Henceforth adieu to half-n ade villains—There's danger in them. What you have got is yours; keep it, and hide with it—— I'll deal my future bounty to those that merit it.

Bates. What's the reward?

Stuke. Equal division of our gains. I swear it, and will be just.

Bates. Think of the means then.

Stuke. He's gone to Beverley's——Wait for him in the street—'Tis a dark night, and fit for mischief. A dagger would be useful.

Bates. He sleeps no more.

Stuke. Consider the reward. When the deed's done, I have farther business with you. Send Dawson to me.

Bates. Think it already done—and so, farewell.

[*Exit.*

Stuke. Why, farewell Lewson, then; and farewell to my fears. This night secures me. I'll wait the event within. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

Changes to the Street. Stage darkened. Enter BEVERLEY.

Bev. How like an out-cast do I wander? Loaded with every curse that drives the soul to desperation—The midnight robber, as he walks his rounds, sees by the glimmering lamp my frantic looks, and dreads to meet me. Whither am I going? My home lies there; all that is dear on earth it holds too; yet are the gates of death more welcome to me—I'll enter it no more——Who passes there? 'Tis Lewson——He meets me in a gloomy hour; and memory tells me he has been meddling with my fame.

Enter LEWSON.

Lew. Beverley! Well met. I have been busy in your affairs.

Bev. So I have heard, sir; and now must thank you as I ought.

Lew. To-morrow I may deserve your thanks. Late as it is, I go to Bates. Discoveries are making that an arch villain trembles at.

Bev. Discoveries are made, sir, that you shall tremble at. Where is this boasted spirit, this high demeanour, that was to call me to account? You say I have wrong'd my sister——Now say as much. But first be ready for defence, as I am for resentment.

[*Draws.*

Lew. What mean you? I understand you not.

Bev. The coward's stale acquaintance! who, when he spreads foul calumny abroad, and dreads just vengeance on him, cries out, What mean you? I understand you not.

Lew. Coward and calumny! Whence are those words? But I forgive, and pity you.

Bev. Your pity had been kinder to my fame. But you have traduced it; told a vile story to the public ear, that I have wronged my sister.

Lew. 'Tis false. Shew me the man that dares accuse me.

Bev. I thought you brave, and of a soul superior to low malice; but I have found you, and will have vengeance. This is no place for argument.

Lew. Nor shall it be for violence. Imprudent man! who, in revenge for fancied injuries, would pierce the heart that loves him. But honest friendship acts from itself, unmoved by slander "or ingratitude. "The life you thirst for shall be employed to serve "you.

"*Bev.* 'Tis thus you would compound then——
"First, do a wrong beyond forgiveness, and, to re-
"dress it, load me with kindnesses unsolicited. I'll
"not receive it. Your zeal is troublesome.

"*Lew.* No matter. It shall be useful.

"*Bev.* It will not be accepted.

"*Lew.* It must." You know me not.

Bev. Yes, for the slanderer of my fame; who, under shew of friendship, arraigns me of injustice;

buzzing in every ear foul breach of trust, and family dishonour.

Lew. Have I done this? Who told you so?

Bev. The world——'Tis talked of every where. It pleased you to add threats too. You were to call me to account——Why, do it now, then: I shall be proud of such an arbiter.

Lew. Put up your sword, and know me better. I never injured you. The base suggestion comes from Stukely: I see him and his aims.

Bev. What aims? I'll not conceal it; 'twas Stukely that accused you.

Lew. To rid him of an enemy—Perhaps of two—He fears discovery, and frames a tale of falsehood, to ground revenge and murder on.

Bev. I must have proof of this.

Lew. Wait till to-morrow then.

Bev. I will.

Lew. Good night——I go to serve you——Forget what's past, as I do; and cheer your family with smiles. To-morrow may confirm them, and make all happy. [*Exit.*

Bev. [*Pausing.*] How vile, and how absurd is man! His boasted honour is but another name for pride, which easier bears the consciousness of guilt, than the world's just reproofs. But 'tis the fashion of the times; and in defence of falsehood and false honour men die martyrs. I knew not that my nature was so bad. [*Stands musing.*

Enter BATES, *and* JARVIS.

Jar. This way the noise was; and yonder's my poor master.

Bates. I heard him at high words with Lewson. The cause I know not.

Jar. I heard him too. Misfortunes vex him.

Bates. Go to him, and lead him home. But he comes this way——I'll not be seen by him. [*Exit.*

Bev. [*Starting.*] What fellow's that? [*Seeing* Jarvis.] Art thou a murderer, friend? Come, lead the way; I have a hand as mischievous as thine; a heart as desperate too——Jarvis!——To bed, old man; the cold will chill thee.

Jar. Why are you wandering at this late hour? Your sword drawn too?—For Heaven's sake, sheath it, sir—the sight distracts me.

Bev. Whose voice was that? [*Wildly.*

Jar. 'Twas mine, sir. Let me intreat you to give the sword to me.

Bev. Ay, take it—quickly take it—Perhaps I am not so curs'd, but Heaven may have sent thee at this moment to snatch me from perdition.

Jar. Then I am bless'd.

Bev. Continue so, and leave me: my sorrows are contagious. No one is bless'd that's near me.

Jar. I came to seek you, sir.

Bev. And now thou hast found me, leave me—My thoughts are wild, and will not be disturbed.

Jar. Such thoughts are best disturbed.

Bev. I tell thee that they will not. Who sent thee hither?

Jar. My weeping mistress.

Bev. Am I so meek a husband then, that a commanding wife prescribes my hours, and sends to chide me for my absence?——Tell her I'll not return.

Jar. Those words would kill her.

Bev. Kill her! Would they not be kind, then? But she shall live to curse me——I have deserved it of her. Does she not hate me, Jarvis?

Jar. Alas, sir, forget your griefs, and let me lead you to her! The streets are dangerous.

Bev. Be wise, and leave me then. The night's black horrors are suited to my thoughts—These stones shall be my resting-place. [*Lies down.*] Here shall my soul brood o'er it's miseries, till, with the fiends of hell, and guilty of the earth, I start and tremble at the morning's light.

Jar. For pity's sake, sir——Upon my knees, I beg you to quit this place, and these sad thoughts.—Let patience, not despair, possess you——Rise, I beseech you——There's not a moment of your absence, that my poor mistress does not groan for.

Bev. Have I undone her, and is she still so kind? [*Starting up.*] It is too much—My brain cann't hold it——Oh, Jarvis, how desperate is that wretch's state, which only death or madness can relieve!

Jar. Appease his mind, good Heaven, and give him resignation! Alas, sir, could beings in the other world

perceive the events of this, how would your parents blessed spirits grieve for you even in Heaven!—Let me conjure you, by their honoured memories; by the sweet innocence of your yet helpless child, and by the ceaseless sorrows of my poor mistress, to rouse your manhood, and struggle with these griefs.

Bev. Thou virtuous, good old man! thy tears and thy entreaties have reached my heart, through all its miseries.

"*Jar.* Be but resigned, sir, and happiness may yet be yours.

"*Bev.* Pr'ythee be honest, and do not flatter mi-"sery.

Jar. I do not, sir."—Hark! I hear voices—Come this way; we may reach home unnoticed.

Bev. "Well, lead me then."——Unnoticed, didst thou say? Alas I dread no looks but of those wretches I have made at home! Oh, had I listened to thy honest warnings, no earthly blessing had been wanting to me!——I was so happy, that even a wish for more than I possessed, was arrogant presumption. But I have warred against the power that blessed me; and now am forced to the hell I merit. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Changes to STUKELY'S. *Enter* STUKELY *and* DAWSON.

Stuke. Come hither, Dawson. My limbs are on the

rack, and my soul shivers in me, till this night's business be complete. Tell me thy thoughts; is Bates determined, or does he waver?

Daw. At first he seemed irresolute; wished the employment had been mine; and muttered curses on his coward hand, that trembled at the deed.

Stuke. And did he leave you so?

Daw. No; we walked together, and, sheltered by the darkness, saw Beverley and Lewson in warm debate. But soon they cooled, and then I left them to hasten hither; but not till 'twas resolved Lewson should die.

Stuke. Thy words have given me life. That quarrel, too, was fortunate; for, if my hopes deceive me not, it promises a grave to Beverley.

Daw. You misconceive me. Lewson and he were friends.

Stuke. But my prolific brain shall make them enemies. If Lewson falls, he falls by Beverley. An upright jury shall decree it. Ask me no question; but do as I direct. This writ, [*Takes out a pocket-book.*] for some days past, I have treasured here, till a convenient time called for its use. That time is come. Take it, and give it to an officer. It must be served this instant. [*Gives a paper.*

Daw. On Beverley!

Stuke. Look at it. 'Tis for the sums that I have lent him.

Daw. Must he to prison then?

Stuke. I asked obedience, not replies. This night

a jail must be his lodging. 'Tis probable he's not gone home yet. Wait at his door, and see it executed.

Daw. Upon a beggar?——He has no means of payment.

Stuke. Dull and insensible!—If Lewson dies, who was it killed him?——Why, he that was seen quarrelling with him: and I, that knew of Beverley's intents, arrested him in friendship——A little late, perhaps; but 'twas a virtuous act, and men will thank me for't. Now, sir, you understand me?

Daw. Most perfectly; and will about it.

Stuke. Haste, then; and when 'tis done, come back and tell me.

Daw. Till then, farewell. [*Exit.*

Stuke. Now tell thy tale, fond wife! And, Lewson, if again thou canst insult me, "I'll kneel, and own thee for my master."

Not avarice now, but vengeance fires my breast,
And one short hour must make me curs'd or bless'd.

[Exit.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Continues. Enter STUKELY, BATES, *and* DAWSON.

Bates.

POOR Lewson!——But I told you enough last night. The thought of him is horrible to me.

Stuke. In the street, did you say? And no one near him?

Bates. By his own door; he was leading me to his house. I pretended business with him, and stabbed him to the heart, while he was reaching at the bell.

Stuke. And did he fall so suddenly?

Bates. The repetition pleases you, I see. I told you he fell without a groan.

Stuke. What heard you of him this morning?

Bates. That the watch found him in their rounds, and alarmed the servants. I mingled with the crowd just now, and saw him dead in his own house——The sight terrified me.

Stuke. Away with terrors, till his ghost rise and accuse us. We have no living enemy to fear, unless 'tis Beverley; and him we have lodged safe in prison.

Bates. Must he be murdered too?

Stuke. No; I have a scheme to make the law his murderer. At what hour did Lewson fall?

Bates. The clock struck twelve as I turned to leave him. 'Twas a melancholy bell, I thought, tolling for his death.

Stuke. The time was lucky for us——Beverley was arrested at one, you say? [*To* Dawson.

Daw. Exactly.

Stuke. Good. We'll talk of this presently. The women were with him, I think?

Daw. And old Jarvis. I would have told you of

them last night, but your thoughts were too busy.—'Tis well you have a heart of stone; the tale would melt it else.

Stuke. Out with it, then.

Daw. I traced him to his lodgings; and, pretending pity for his misfortunes, kept the door open, while the officers seized him. 'Twas a damned deed—but no matter——I followed my instructions.

Stuke. And what said he?

Daw. He upbraided me with treachery, called you a villain, acknowledged the sums you had lent him, and submitted to his fortune.

Stuke. And the women——

Daw. For a few minutes astonishment kept them silent. They looked wildly at one another, while the tears streaming down their cheeks. But rage and fury soon gave them words; and then, in the very bitterness of despair, they cursed me, and the monster that had employed me.

Stuke. And you bore it with philosophy?

Daw. 'Till the scene changed, and then I melted. I ordered the officers to take away their prisoner. The women shrieked and would have followed him; but we forbade them. 'Twas then they fell upon their knees, the wife fainted, the sister raving, and both, with all the eloquence of misery, endeavouring to soften us. I never felt compassion till that moment; and had the officers been moved like me, we had left the business undone, and fled with curses on ourselves. But their hearts were steeled by custom.

The tears of beauty, and the pangs of affection were beneath their pity. They tore him from their arms, and lodged him in prison, with only Jarvis to comfort him.

Stuke. There let him lie, 'till we have farther business with him——" And for you, sir, let me hear no " more of your compassion——A fellow nursed in " villany, and employed from childhood in the busi- " ness of hell, should have no dealings with com- " passion.

" *Daw.* Say you so, sir?—You should have named " the devil that tempted me——

" *Stuke.* 'Tis false. I found you a villain, and " therefore employed you—but no more of this—We " have embarked too far in mischief to recede. Lew- " son is dead, and we are all principals in his murder. " Think of that—There's time enough for pity when " ourselves are out of danger——Beverley still lives, " though in a gaol—His ruin will sit heavy on him; " and discoveries may be made to undo us all. Some- " thing must be done, and speedily.——You saw him " quarrelling with Lewson in the street last night.

[" *To* Bates.

" *Bates.* I did; his steward, Jarvis, saw him too.

" *Stuke.* And shall attest it. Here's matter to work " upon.—An unwilling evidence carries weight with " him." Something of my design I have hinted t'you before—Beverley must be the author of this murder; and we the parties to convict him——But how to proceed will require time and thought——Come along

with me; the room within is fitted for privacy—But no compassion, sir [*To* Dawson.]—We want leisure for't——This way. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Changes to BEVERLEY'*s Lodgings. Enter Mrs.* BEVERLEY *and* CHARLOTTE.

Mrs. Bev. No news of Lewson yet?

Char. None. He went out early, and knows not what has happened.

Mrs. Bev. The clock strikes eight——I'll wait no longer.

Char. Stay but 'till Jarvis comes. He has sent twice to stop us 'till we see him.

Mrs. Bev. I have no life in this separation——Oh, what a night was last night! I would not pass another such to purchase worlds by it——My poor Beverley too! What must he have felt?——The very thought distracts me——To have him torn at midnight from me! A loathsome prison his habitation! A cold damp room his lodging! The bleak winds perhaps blowing upon his pillow! No fond wife to lull him to his rest! and no reflections but to wound and tear him!——'Tis too horrible——I wanted love for him, or they had not forced him from me.——They should have parted soul and body first—I was too tame.

Char. You must not talk so.——All that we could

we did; and Jarvis did the rest—The faithful creature will give him comfort. Why does he delay coming?

Mrs. Bev. And there's another fear. His poor master may be claiming the last kind office from him—His heart perhaps is breaking.

Char. See where he comes—His looks are cheerful too.

Enter JARVIS.

Mrs. Bev. Are tears then cheerful? Alas, he weeps! Speak to him, Charlotte——I have no tongue to ask him quesions.

Char. How does your master, Jarvis?

Jar. I am old and foolish, madam; and tears will come before my words—But don't you weep; [*To Mrs.* Bev.] I have a tale of joy for you.

Mrs. Bev. What tale?——Say but he's well, and I have joy enough.

Jar. His mind too shall be well—all shall be well—I have news for him, that will make his poor heart bound again——Fie upon old age——How childish it makes me! I have a tale of joy for you, and my tears drown it.

Char. Shed them in showers then, and make haste to tell it.

Mrs. Bev. What is it, Jarvis?

Jar. Yet why should I rejoice when a good man dies? Your uncle, madam, died yesterday.

Mrs. Bev. My uncle!——Oh, Heavens!

Char. How heard you of his death?

Jar. His steward came express, madam—I met him in the street, enquiring for your lodgings—I should not rejoice perhaps—but he was old, and my poor master a prisoner—Now he shall live again—Oh, 'tis a brave fortune! and 'twas death to me to see him a prisoner.

Char. Where left you the steward?

Jar. I would not bring him hither, to be a witness of your distresses; and besides, I wanted, once before I die, to be the messenger of joy to you. My good master will be a man again.

Mrs. Bev. Haste, haste then; and let us fly to him! We are delaying our own happiness.

Jar. I had forgot a coach, madam, and Lucy has ordered one.

Mrs. Bev. Where was the need of that? The news has given me wings.

Char. I have no joy, 'till my poor brother shares it with me. How did he pass the night, Jarvis?

Jar. Why now, madam, I can tell you. Like a man dreaming of death and horrors. When they led him to his cell—For 'twas a poor apartment for my master—He flung himself upon a wretched bed, and lay speechless 'till day-break. A sigh now and then, and a few tears that follow those sighs, were all that told me he was alive. I spoke to him, but he would not hear me; and when I persisted, he raised his hand at me, and knit his brow so——I thought he would have struck me.

Mrs. Bev. Oh, miserable! but what said he, Jarvis? Or was he silent all night?

Jar. At day-break he started from the bed, and looking wildly at me, asked who I was. I told him, and bid him be of comfort——Begone, old wretch, says he——I have sworn never to know comfort.—My wife! my child! my sister! I have undone them all, and will know no comfort. Then falling upon his knees, he imprecated curses upon himself.

Mrs. Bev. This is too horrible!——But you did not leave him so?

Char. No, I am sure he did not.

Jar. I had not the heart, madam. By degrees I brought him to himself. A shower of tears came to his relief; and he called me his kindest friend, and begged forgiveness of me like a child.——My heart throbbed so, I could not speak to him. He turned from me for a minute or two, and suppressing a few bitter sighs, enquired after his wretched family.—— "Wretched was his word, madam—Asked how you "bore the misery of last night—If you had the good- "ness to see him in prison: and then begged me to "hasten to you. I told him he must be more himself "first—He promised me he would; and bating a few "sudden intervals, he became composed and easy— "And then I left him; but not without an attendant "—a servant in the prison whom I hired to wait "upon him—'Tis an hour since we parted——I was "prevented in my haste to be the messenger of joy "to you."

Mrs. Bev. What a tale is this?—But we have staid too long——" A coach is needless.

" *Char.* Hark! I hear one at the door."

Jar. " And Lucy comes to tell us"——We'll away this moment.

Mrs. Bev. To comfort him, or die with him. [*Ex.*

" *SCENE III.*

" *Changes to* STUKELY's *Lodgings. Enter* STUKELY, " BATES, *and* DAWSON.

" *Stuke.* Here's presumptive evidence at least—or " if we want more, why we must swear more. But " all unwillingly—We gain credit by reluctance—I " have told you how to proceed. Beverley must die " ——We hunt him in view now, and must not " slacken in the chace. 'Tis either death for him, or " shame and punishment for us. Think of that, and " remember your instructions—You, Bates, must to " the prison immediately. I would be there but a " few minutes before you; and you, Dawson, must " follow in a few minutes after. So here we divide " ——But answer me; are you resolved upon this " business like men?

" *Bates.* Like villains rather—But you may depend upon us.

" *Stuke.* Like what we are then—You make no an- " swer, Dawson—Compassion, I suppose, has seized " you.

"*Daw.* No; I have disclaimed it——My answer
"is Bates's——You may depend upon me.
"*Stuke.* Consider the reward! Riches and secu-
"rity! I have sworn to divide with you to the last
"shilling——So here we separate till we meet in pri-
"son—— Remember your instructions, and be men.
"[*Exeunt.*"

SCENE IV.

Changes to a Prison. BEVERLEY *is discovered sitting. After a short pause, he starts up, and comes forward.*

Bev. Why, there's an end then, I have judged deliberately, and the result is death. How the self-murderer's account may stand, I know not. But this I know—the load of hateful life oppresses me too much—The horrors of my soul are more than I can bear—[*Offers to kneel.*] Father of mercy!——I cannot pray——Despair has laid his iron hand upon me, and sealed me for perdition——Conscience! Conscience! thy clamours are too loud——Here's that shall silence thee. [*Takes a phial out of his pocket, and looks at it.*] Thou art most friendly to the miserable. Come then, thou cordial for sick minds——Come to my heart. [*Drinks.*] Oh, that the grave would bury memory as well as body! For if the soul sees and feels the sufferings of those dear ones it leaves behind, the Everlasting has no vengeance to torment it deeper—I'll think no more on't—Reflection comes too late—

Once there was a time for't—but now 'tis past.—— Who's there?

Enter JARVIS.

Jar. One that hoped to see you with better looks— Why d'you turn so from me? I have brought comfort with me. And see who comes to give it welcome.

Bev. My wife and sister! Why, 'tis but one pang more then, and farewell world. [*Aside.*

Enter Mrs. BEVERLEY *and* CHARLOTTE.

Mrs. Bev. Where is he? [*Runs and embraces him.*] Oh, I have him! I have him! And now they shall never part us more—I have news, love, to make you happy for ever——" But don't look coldly on me.

" *Char.* How is it, brother?

" *Mrs. Bev.*" Alas! he hears us not——Speak to me, love. I have no heart to see you thus.

Bev. " Nor I to bear the sense of so much shame" —This is a sad place!

Mrs. Bev. We came to take you from it. To tell you the world goes well again. That Providence has seen our sorrows, and sent the means to help them— Your uncle died yesterday.

Bev. My uncle!—No, do not say so!—Oh, I am sick at heart!

Mrs. Bev. Indeed!—I meant to bring you comfort.

Bev. Tell me he lives then——If you would bring me comfort, tell me he lives.

Mrs. Bev. And if I did—I have no power to raise the dead——He died yesterday.

Bev. And I am heir to him?

Jar. To his whole estate, sir——But bear it patiently—pray bear it patiently.

Bev. Well, well—[*Pausing.*] Why, fame says I am rich then?

Mrs. Bev. And truly so——Why do you look so wildly?

Bev. Do I? The news was unexpected. But has he left me all?

Jar. All, all, sir—He could not leave it from you.

Bev. I am sorry for it.

" *Char.* Sorry! Why sorry?

" *Bev.* Your uncle's dead, Charlotte.

" *Char.* Peace be with his soul then—Is it so ter-
" rible that an old man should die?

" *Bev.* He should have been immortal."

Mrs. Bev. " Heaven knows I wished not for his
" death. 'Twas the will of Providence that he should
" die"——Why are you disturbed so?

Bev. Has death no terrors in it?

Mrs. Bev. Not an old man's death. Yet if it troubles you, I wish him living.

Bev. And I, with all my heart.

" *Char.* Why, what's the matter?

" *Bev.* Nothing—How heard you of his death?

" *Mrs. Bev.* His steward came express. Would I
" had never known it!"

Bev. " Or had heard it one day sooner"——For I

have a tale to tell, shall turn you into stone; or, if the power of speech remain, you shall kneel down and curse me.

Mrs. Bev. Alas! what tale is this? And why are we to curse you—I'll bless you for ever.

Bev. No; I have deserved no blessings. The world holds not such another wretch. All this large fortune, this second bounty of Heaven, that might have healed our sorrows, and satisfied our utmost hopes, in a cursed hour I sold last night.

Char. Sold! How sold?

Mrs. Bev. Impossible!—It cannot be!

Bev. That devil Stukely, with all hell to aid him, tempted me to the deed. To pay false debts of honour, and to redeem past errors, I sold the reversion ——Sold it for a scanty sum, and lost it among villains.

Char. Why, farewell all then.

Bev. Liberty and life—Come, kneel and curse me.

Mrs. Bev. Then hear me, Heaven! [*Kneels.*] Look down with mercy on his sorrows! Give softness to his looks, and quiet to his heart! Take from his memory the sense of what is past, and cure him of despair! On me! on me! if misery must be the lot of either, multiply misfortunes! I'll bear them patiently, so he is happy! These hands shall toil for his support! These eyes be lifted up for hourly blessings on him! And every duty of a fond and faithful wife be doubly done to cheer and comfort him!—So hear me! So reward me! [*Rises.*

Bev. I would kneel too, but that offended Heaven would turn my prayers into curses. "What have I "to ask for? I, who have shook hands with hope? "Is it for length of days that I should kneel? No; "my time is limited. Or is it for this world's bles- "sings upon you and yours? To pour out my heart "in wishes for a ruined wife, a child, and sister? "Oh, no!" for I have done a deed to make life horrible to you——

"*Mrs. Bev.* Why horrible? Is poverty so hor- "rible?—The real wants of life are few. A little "industry will supply them all—And cheerfulness "will follow—It is the privilege of honest industry, "and we'll enjoy it fully.

"*Bev.* Never, never—Oh, I have told you but in "part. The irrevocable deed is done."

Mrs. Bev. What deed?—"And why do you look "so at me?

"*Bev.* A deed that dooms my soul to vengeance— "That seals your misery here, and mine hereafter.

"*Mrs. Bev.* No, no; you have a heart too good "for't—Alas! he raves, Charlotte—His looks too "terrify me—Speak comfort to him—He can have "done no deed of wickedness.

"*Char.* And yet I fear the worst——What is it, "brother?"

Bev. A deed of horror.

Jar. Ask him no questions, madam—This last misfortune has hurt his brain. A little time will give him patience.

Enter STUKELY.

Bev. Why is this villain here?

Stuke. To give you liberty and safety. There, madam's, his discharge. [*Giving a paper to Mrs.* Beverley.] Let him fly this moment. The arrest last night was meant in friendship; but came too late.

Char. What mean you, sir?

Stuke. The arrest was too late, I say; I would have kept his hands from blood, but was too late.

Mrs. Bev. His hands from blood!—Whose blood?—Oh, wretch! wretch!

Stuke. From Lewson's blood.

Char. No, villain! Yet what of Lewson? Speak quickly.

Stuke. You are ignorant then! I thought I heard the murderer at confession.

Char. What murderer?—And who is murdered? Not Lewson?—Say he lives, and I'll kneel and worship you.

Stuke. In pity, so I would; but that the tongues of all cry murder. I came in pity, not in malice; to save the brother, not kill the sister. Your Lewson's dead.

Char. O horrible! "Why who has killed him? "And yet it cannot be. What crime had he com- "mitted that he should die? Villain! he lives! he "lives! and shall revenge these pangs.

"*Mrs. Bev.* Patience, sweet Charlotte!

"*Char.* O, 'tis too much for patience!

" *Mrs. Bev.* He comes in pity, he says! O, ex-
" ecrable villain! The friend is killed then, and this
" the murderer?"

Bev. Silence, I charge you.——Proceed, sir.

Stuke. No. Justice may stop the tale—and here's an evidence.

Enter BATES.

Bates. The news, I see, has reached you. But take comfort, madam. [*To* Char.] There's one without enquiring for you.—Go to him, and lose no time.

Char. O misery! misery! [*Exit.*

Mrs. Bev. Follow her, Jarvis. If it be true that Lewson's dead, her grief may kill her.

Bates. Jarvis must stay here, madam. I have some questions for him.

Stuke. Rather let him fly. His evidence may crush his master.

Bev. Why ay; this looks like management.

Bates. He found you quarrelling with Lewson in the streets last night. [*To* Bev.

Mrs. Bev. No; I am sure he did not.

Jar. Or if I did———

Mrs. Bev. 'Tis false, old man—They had no quarrel; there was no cause for quarrel.

Bev. Let him proceed, I say——Oh! I am sick! sick!———Reach a chair. [*He sits down.*

Mrs. Bev. You droop and tremble, love.——Your eyes are fixed too———Yet you are innocent. If Lewson's dead, you killed him not.

Enter DAWSON.

Stuke. Who sent for Dawson?

Bates. 'Twas I——We have a witness too you little think of——Without there!

Stuke. What witness?

Bates. A right one. Look at him.

Enter LEWSON *and* CHARLOTTE.

Stuke. Lewson! O villains! villains! [*To* Bates *and* Dawson.

Mrs. Bev. Risen from the dead! Why, this is unexpected happiness!

Char. Or is't his ghost? [*To* Stukely.] That sight would please you, sir.

Jar. What riddle's this?

Bev. Be quick and tell it——My minutes are but few.

Mrs. Bev. Alas! why so? You shall live long and happily.

Lew. While shame and punishment shall rack that viper. [*Pointing to* Stukely.] The tale is short—I was too busy in his secrets, and therefore doomed to die. Bates, to prevent the murder, undertook it—I kept aloof to give it credit.——

Char. And give me pangs unutterable.

Lew. I felt 'em all, and would have told you——But vengeance wanted ripening. The villain's scheme was but half executed. The arrest by Dawson followed the supposed murder——And now, depending

on his once wicked associates, he comes to fix the guilt on Beverley.

Mrs. Bev. O! execrable wretch!

Bates. Dawson and I are witnesses of this.

Lew. And of a thousand frauds. His fortune ruined by sharpers and false dice; and Stukely sole contriver and possessor of all.

Daw. Had he but stopped on this side murder, we had been villains still.

Mrs. Bev. Thus Heaven turns evil into good: and by permitting sin, warns men to virtue.

Lew. Yet punishes the instrument. So shall our laws; tho' not with death. But death were mercy. Shame, beggary, and imprisonment, unpitied misery, the stings of conscience, and the curses of mankind shall make life hateful to him—till at last his own hand end him—How does my friend? [*To* Bev.

Bev. Why well. Who's he that asks me?

Mrs. Bev. 'Tis Lewson, love——Why do you look so at him?

Bev. They told me he was murdered. [*Wildly.*

Mrs. Bev. Ay; but he lives to save us.

Bev. Lend me your hand—The room turns round.

Mrs. Bev. O Heaven!

Lew. This villain here disturbs him. Remove him from his sight——And for your lives see that you guard him. [Stukely *is taken off by* Dawson *and* Bates.] How is it, sir?

Bev. 'Tis here——and here. [*Pointing to his head and heart.*] And now it tears me!

Mrs. Bev. You feel convulsed too——What is't disturbs you?

Lew. This sudden turn of joy, perhaps——He " wants rest too——Last night was dreadful to him. " His brain is giddy.

" *Char.* Ay, never to be cured——Why, brother! " —O! I fear! I fear!

" *Mrs. Bev.* "Preserve him, Heaven!"—My love! my life! look at me!——How his eyes flame!

Bev. A furnace rages in this heart——" I have " been too hasty.

" *Mrs. Bev.* Indeed!——O me! O me!——Help, " Jarvis! Fly, fly for help! Your master dies else. " —Weep not, but fly! [*Exit* Jarvis.] What is this " hasty deed?—Yet do not answer me——My fears " have guessed.

" *Bev.* Call back the messenger——'Tis not in me- " dicine's power to help me.

" *Mrs. Bev.* Is it then so?

" *Bev.*" Down, restless flames!——[*Laying his hand on his heart.*] down to your native hell—— There you shall rack me—O! for a pause from pain!

" *Mrs. Bev.* Help, Charlotte! Support him, sir! " [*To* Lewson.] This is a killing sight!

" *Bev.* That pang was well—It has numbed my " senses."——Where's my wife?——Can you for- give me, love?

Mrs. Bev. Alas! for what?

" *Bev.* [*Starting again.*] And there's another pang " ——Now all is quiet—Will you forgive me?

"*Mrs. Bev.* I will——tell me for what?"

Bev. For meanly dying.

Mrs. Bev. No——do not say it.

Bev. As truly as my soul must answer it.—Had Jarvis staid this morning, all had been well. But pressed by shame—pent in a prison—tormented with my pangs for you—driven to despair and madness—I took the advantage of his absence, corrupted the poor wretch he left to guard me, and—swallowed poison.

Mrs. Bev. O fatal deed!

Char. Dreadful and cruel!

Bev. Ay, most accursed—And now I go to my account. "This rest from pain brings death; yet 'tis "Heaven's kindness to me. I wished for ease, a mo-"ment's ease, that cool repentance and contrition "might soften vengeance."——Bend me, and let me kneel. [*They lift him from his chair, and support him on his knees.*] I'll pray for you too. Thou Power that madest me, hear me! If for a life of frailty, and this too hasty deed of death, thy justice dooms me, here I acquit the sentence. But if enthroned in mercy where thou sittest, thy pity has beheld me, send me a gleam of hope; that in these last and bitter moments my soul may taste of comfort! and for these mourners here, O! let their lives be peaceful, and their deaths happy!——"Now raise me."

[*They lift him to the chair.*

Mrs. Bev. Restore him, Heaven! Stretch forth thy arm omnipotent, and snatch him from the grave!—O save him! save him! *or let me die too.*

" *Bev.* Alas! that prayer is fruitless. Already
" death has seized me—Yet Heaven is gracious——I
" [redacted] for hope, as the bright presage of forgiveness,
" an[redacted]like a light, blazing through darkness, it came
" an[redacted]ered me—'Twas all I lived for," and now I die.

" *Mrs. Bev.* Not yet!—Not yet!—Stay but a little
" and I'll die too."

Bev. No; live, I charge you.—We have a little one.—Tho' I have left him, you will not leave him.—To Lewson's kindness I bequeath him.—Is not this Charlotte?—We have lived in love, tho' I have wronged you.——Can you forgive me, Charlotte?

Char. Forgive you! O my poor brother!

Bev. " Lend me your hand, love——So—raise me
" ——No——'twill not be——My life is finished—"
O! for a few short moments, to tell you how my heart bleeds for you—That even now, thus dying as I am, dubious and fearful of hereafter, my bosom pang is for your miseries, support her, Heaven!—And now I go ——O, mercy! mercy! [*Dies.*

Lew. Then all is over——How is it, madam?—— My poor Charlotte too!

Enter JARVIS.

" *Jar.* How does my master, madam? Here's help at hand——Am I too late then? [*Seeing* Bev.

" *Char.* Tears! tears! why fall you not———O
" wretched sister!———Speak to her, Lewson——"
Her grief is speechless.

Lew. "Remove her from this sight—Go to her, "Jarvis—Lead and support her." Sorrow like hers forbids complaint——Words are for lighter griefs— Some ministering angel bring her peace! [*Jar. and* Char. *lead her off.*] And thou, poor breathless corpse, may thy departed soul have found the rest it prayed for! Save but one error, and this last fatal deed, thy life was lovely. Let frailer minds take warning; and from example learn, that want of prudence is want of virtue.

Follies, if uncontroul'd, of every kind,
Grow into passions, and subdue the mind;
With sense and reason hold superior strife,
And conquer honour, nature, fame and life,

[Exeunt omnes.

EPILOGUE.

Written by a Friend.

[illegible]er in th' Arabian nation,
'Tis [illegible] Mahomet denounc'd damnation:
But in return for wicked cards and dice,
He gave 'em black ey'd girls in Paradise.
Should he thus preach, good countrymen, to you,
His converts would, I fear, be mighty few,
So much your hearts are set on sordid gain,
The brightest eyes around you shine in vain.
Should the most Heavenly beauty bid you take her,
You'd rather hold——two aces and a maker.
By your example, our poor sex drawn in,
Is guilty of the same unnat'ral sin;
The study now of ev'ry girl of parts,
Is how to win your money, not your hearts.
O! in what sweet, what ravishing delights
Our beaux and belles together pass their nights!
By ardent perturbations kept awake,
Each views with longing eyes the other's—stake.
The smiles and graces are from Britain flown,
Our Cupid is an errant sharper grown,
And Fortune sits on Cythera's throne.
In all these things, tho' women may be blam'd,
Sure men, the wiser men, should be asham'd.

And 'tis a horrid scandal, I declare,
That four strange queens should rival all the fair;
Four jilts with neither beauty, wit, nor parts,
O shame! have got possession of their hearts:
And those bold sluts, for all their queenly [illegible]
Have play'd loose tricks, or else they're [illegible]
Cards were at first for benefits design'd,
Sent to amuse, and not enslave the mind.
From good to bad how easy the transition!
For what was pleasure once, is now perdition.
Fair ladies, then, these wicked gamesters shun,
Whoever weds one, is, you see, undone.

THE END.

De Wilde pinxt. Thornthwaite sculp.

Mrs LEE LEWIS as LADY SADLIFE.

I can't tell how to write to any body but you [illegible]

London. Printed for J. Bell British Library, Strand, Nov.r 10 1779.

Act IV.

DOUBLE GALLANT

Lady Sadlife. Ha! what do I see? my Servant on the Floor and Sir Solomon offering rudeness to her.

Farney del. White Sculp.t

London. Printed for J. Bell. British Library, Strand. Nov.r 2.1792.

THE DOUBLE GALLANT;

OR,

THE SICK LADY's CURE.

A

COMEDY,

By COLLEY CIBBER, Esq.

ADAPTED FOR

THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRES-ROYAL,

DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,

By Permission of the Managers.

"The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."

LONDON:

Printed for the Proprietors, under the Direction of

JOHN BELL, British-Library, STRAND,

Bookseller to His Royal Highness the PRINCE of WALES.

MDCCXCII.

PROLOGUE.

COULD those, who never try'd, conceive the sweat,
The toil requir'd, to make a Play complete;
They'd pardon, or encourage all that could
Pretend to be but tolerably good.
Plot, Wit, and Humour's hard to meet in one,
And yet, without 'em all——all's lamely done:
One Wit, perhaps, another Humour paints;
A third designs you well, but Genius wants;
A fourth begins with fire—but, ah! too weak to hold it,
faints.
A modern Bard, who late adorn'd the bays,
Whose muse advanc'd his fame to envy'd praise,
Was still observ'd to want his judgment most in plays.
Those, he too often found, required the pain,
And stronger forces of a vig'rous brain:
Nay, even alter'd Plays, like old houses mended,
Cost little less than new, before they're ended;
At least, our Author finds the experience true,
For equal pains has made this wholly new:
And tho' the Name *seems old, the* Scenes *will show*
That 'tis, in fact, no more the same, than now
Fam'd Chatsworth is, what 'twas some years ago.
Pardon the boldness, that a Play should dare,
With works of so much wonder to compare;

But as that fabric's ancient, walls or wood
Were little worth, to make this new one good;
So of this Play, we hope, 'tis understood.
For tho' from former Scenes *some hints he draws,*
The ground-plot's wholly chang'd from what it was:
Not but he hopes you'll find enough that's new,
In plot, in persons, wit, and humour too:
Yet what's not his, he owns in other's right,
Nor toils he now for fame, but your delight.
If that's attain'd, what's the matter whose the Play's;
Applaud the Scenes, *and strip him of the praise.*

THE DOUBLE GALLANT.

THIS Play was at first vehemently disapproved by the audience, in short, run down; two years after, it found such an audience as it deserved, and has continued a stock play ever since 1709.

COLLEY CIBBER, who always borrowed from every body that could lend, has here made free with Mrs. CENTLIVRE's *Love at a Venture*, or the French play of the same title, as his own; and also with something from BURNABY's *Visiting Day*.

Managers of Companies who write, object to this practice in every author but themselves.

Dramatis Personæ.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

Sir SOLOMON SADLIFE,	Mr. Quick.
CLERIMONT,	Mr. Macready.
CARELESS,	Mr. Farren.
ATALL,	Mr. Lewis.
Old Mr. WILFUL,	Mr. Cubitt.
Sir HARRY ATALL,	Mr. Thompson.
SUPPLE,	Mr. Cross.
Dr. BLISTER,	Mr. Powell.
RHUBARB,	Mr. C. Powell.
FINDER,	Mr. Bernard.

Women.

Lady DAINTY,	Mrs. Mattocks.
Lady SADLIFE,	Mrs. Pope.
CLARINDA,	Mrs. Bernard.
SYLVIA,	Mrs. Merry.
WISHWELL,	Mrs. Harlowe.
SITUP,	Miss Stuart.

THE DOUBLE GALLANT.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The Park. Enter CLERIMONT *and* ATALL.

Clerimont.

MR. ATALL, your very humble servant.

At. O, Clerimont, such an adventure! I was just going to your lodgings; such a transporting accident! in short, I am now positively in love for altogether.

Cler. All the sex together, I believe.

At. Nay, if thou dost not believe me, and stand my friend, I am ruin'd past redemption.

Cler. Dear sir, if I stand your friend without believing you, won't that do as well? But why should you think I don't believe you? I have seen you twice in love within this fortnight; and it would be hard indeed to suppose a heart of so much mettle could not hold out a third engagement.

At. Then, to be serious, in one word, I am honourably in love; and, if she proves the woman I am sure she must, will positively marry her.

Cler. Marry! O degenerate virtue!

At. Now, will you help me?

Cler. Sir, you may depend upon me. Pray give me leave first to ask a question or two. What is this honourable lady's name?

At. Faith, I don't know.

Cler. What are her parents?

At. I cann't tell.

Cler. What fortune has she?

At. I don't know.

Cler. Where does she live?

At. I cann't tell.

Cler. A very concise account of the person you design to marry. Pray, sir, what is it you do know of her?

At. That I'll tell you. Coming yesterday from Greenwich by water, I overtook a pair of oars, whose lovely freight was one single lady, and a fellow in a handsome livery in the stern. When I came up, I had at first resolved to use the privilege of the element, and bait her with waterman's wit, till I came to the bridge; but, as soon as she saw me, she very prudently prevented my design; and, as I passed, bowed to me with an humble blush, that spoke at once such sense, so just a fear, and modesty, as put the loosest of my thoughts to rout. And when she found her fears had moved me into manners, the cautious gloom that sat upon her beauties disappeared; her sparkling eyes resumed their native fire; she looked, she smiled, she talked, while her diffusive

charms new fired my heart, and gave my soul a softness it never felt before.——To be brief, her conversation was as charming as her person, both easy, unconstrained, and sprightly: but then her limbs! O rapturous thought! The snowy down upon the wings of unfledged love had never half that softness.

Cler. Raptures indeed. Pray, sir, how came you so well acquainted with her limbs?

At. By the most fortunate misfortune sure that ever was: for, as we were shooting the bridge, her boat, by the negligence of the waterman, running against the piles, was overset; out jumps the footman to take care of a single rogue, and down went the poor lady to the bottom. My boat being before her, the stream drove her, by the help of her clothes, toward me; at sight of her I plunged in, caught her in my arms, and, with much ado, supported her till my waterman pulled in to save us. But the charming difficulty of her getting into the boat, gave me a transport that all the wide water in the Thames had not power to cool; for, sir, while I was giving her a lift into the boat, I found the floating of her clothes had left her lovely limbs beneath as bare as a new-born Venus rising from the sea.

Cler. What an impudent happiness art thou capable of!

At. When she was a little recovered from her fright, she began to enquire my name, abode, and circumstances, that she might know to whom she owed her life and preservation. Now, to tell you the

truth, I durst not trust her with my real name, lest she should from thence have discovered that my father was now actually under bonds to marry me to another woman; so, faith, I even told her my name was Freeman, a Gloucestershire gentleman, of a good estate, just come to town about a chancery suit. Besides, I was unwilling any accident should let my father know of my being yet in England, lest he should find me out, and force me to marry the woman I never saw (for which, you know, he commanded me home) before I have time to prevent it.

Cler. Well, but could you not learn the lady's name all this while?

At. No, faith, she was inexorable to all intreaties; only told me in general terms, that if what I vowed to her was sincere, she would give me a proof in a few days what hazards she would run to requite my services; so, after having told her where she might hear of me, I saw her into a chair, pressed her by the cold rosy fingers, kissed them warm, and parted.

Cler. What, then you are quite off with the lady, I suppose, that you made an acquaintance with in the Park last week?

At. No, no; not so neither: one's my Juno, all pride and beauty; but this my Venus, all life, love, and softness. Now, what I beg of thee, dear Clerimont, is this: Mrs. Juno, as I told you, having done me the honour of a civil visit or two at my own lodgings, I must needs borrow thine to entertain Mrs. Venus in; for if the rival goddesses should meet and

clash, you know there would be the devil to do between them.

Cler. Well, sir, my lodgings are at your service:—but you must be very private and sober, I can tell you; for my landlady's a Presbyterian; if she suspects your design, you're blown up, depend upon't.

At. Don't fear; I'll be as careful as a guilty conscience: but I want immediate possession; for I expect to hear from her every moment, and have already directed her to send thither. Pr'ythee, come with me.

Cler. 'Faith you must excuse me; I expect some ladies in the Park that I would not miss of for an empire: but yonder's my servant, he shall conduct you.

At. Very good! that will do as well then; I'll send my man along with him to expect her commands, and call me if she sends: and in the mean time I'll e'en go home to my own lodgings; for, to tell you the truth, I expect a small message there from my goddess imperial. And I am not so much in love with my new bird in the bush, as to let t'other fly out of my hand for her.

Cler. And pray, sir, what name does your goddess imperial, as you call her, know you by?

At. O, sir, with her I pass for a man of arms, and am called Colonel Standfast; with my new face, John Freeman of Flatland-Hall, esq.——But time flies: I must leave you.

Cler. Well, dear Atall, I'm yours——Good luck to

you. [*Exit* At.]——What a happy fellow is this, that owes his success with the women purely to his inconstancy? Here comes another too, almost as happy as he, a fellow that's wise enough to be but half in love, and make his whole life a studied idleness.

Enter CARELESS.

So, Careless! you're constant, I see, to your morning's saunter.——Well, how stand matters?—I hear strange things of thee; that after having railed at marriage all thy life, thou hast resolved to fall into the noose at last.

Care. I don't see any great terror in the noose, as you call it, when a man's weary of liberty: the liberty of playing the fool, when one's turned of thirty, is not of much value.

Cler. Hey-day! Then you begin to have nothing in your head now, but settlements, children, and the main chance?

Care. Even so, faith; but in hopes to come at 'em too, I am forced very often to make my way though pills, elixirs, bolus's, ptisans, and gallipots.

Cler. What, is your mistress an apothecary's widow?

Care. No, but she is an apothecary's shop, and keeps as many drugs in her bed-chamber; she has her physic for every hour of the day and night——for 'tis vulgar, she says to be a moment in rude and perfect health. Her bed lined with poppies; the blackboys at the feet, that the healthy employ to bear flow-

ers in their arms, she loads with diascordium, and other sleepy potions: her sweet bags, instead of the common and offensive smells of musk and amber, breathe nothing but the more modish and salubrious scents of hartshorn, rue, and assafœtida.

Cler. Why, at this rate, she's only fit to be the consort of Hippocrates. But, pray, what other charms has this extraordinary lady?

Care. She has one, Tom, that a man may relish without being so deep a physician.

Cler. What's that?

Care. Why, two thousand pounds a year.

Cler. No vulgar beauty, I confess, sir. But canst thou for any consideration throw thyself into this hospital, this box of physic, and lie all night like leaf-gold upon a pill?

Care. O, dear sir, this is not half the evil; her humour is as fantastic as her diet; nothing that is English must come near her; all her delight is in foreign impertinencies: her rooms are all of Japan or Persia, her dress Indian, and her equipage are all monsters: the coachman came over with his horses, both from Rusisa, Flanders are too common; the rest of her trim are a motley crowd of blacks, tawny, olives, feulamots, and pale blues: in short, she's for any thing that comes from beyond sea; her greatest monsters are those of her own country; and she's in love with nothing o' this side the line, but the apothecaries.

Cler. Apothecaries quotha! why your fine lady, for

aught I see, is a perfect dose of folly and physic; in a month's time she'll grow like an antimonial cup, and a kiss will be able to work with you.

Care. But to prevent that, Tom, I design upon the wedding-day to break all her gallipots, kick the doctor down stairs, and force her, instead of physic, to take a hearty meal of a swinging rump of boiled beef and carrots, and so 'faith I have told her.

Cler. That's something familiar: are you so near man and wife?

Care. O nearer; for I sometimes plague her till she hates the very sight of me.

Cler. Ha, ha! very good! So being a very troublesome lover, you pretend to cure her of her physic by a counter poison.

Care. Right; I intend to see a doctor to prescribe to her an hour of my conversation to be taken every night and morning; and this to be continued till her fever of aversion's over.

Cler. An admirable recipe!

Care. Well, Tom, but how stands thy own affair? Is Clarinda kind yet?

Cler. Faith I cannot say she's absolutely kind, but she's pretty near it: for she's grown so ridiculously ill-humoured to me of late, that if she keeps the same airs a week longer, I am in hopes to find as much ease from her folly, as my constancy would from her good-nature.——But to be plain, I'm afraid I have some secret rival in the case; for women's vanity seldom gives them courage enough to use an old lover

heartily ill, till they are first sure of a new one, that they intend to use better.

Care. What says Sir Solomon? He is your friend, I presume?

Cler. Yes; at least I can make him so when I please: there is an odd five hundred pound in her fortune, that he has a great mind should stick to his fingers, when he pays in the rest on't; which I am afraid I must comply with, for she cann't easily marry without his consent.——And yet she's so altered in her behaviour of late, that I scarce know what to do.——Pr'ythee take a turn and advise me.

Care. With all my heart. [*Exeunt*

SCENE II.

Changes to Sir SOLOMON SADLIFE'S *House. Enter Sir* SOLOMON, *and* SUPPLE *his man.*

Sir Sol. Supple, dost not thou perceive I put a great confidence in thee?——I trust thee with my bosom secrets.

Sup. Yes, sir.

Sir Sol. Ah, Supple! I begin to hate my wife—— but be secret——

Sup. I'll never tell while I live, sir.

Sir Sol. Nay, then I'll trust thee further. Between thee and I, Supple, I have reason to believe my wife hates me too.

Sup. Ah, dear sir! I doubt that's no secret; for

to say the truth, my lady's bitter, young, and gamesome.

Sir Sol. But can she have the impudence, think'st thou, to make a cuckold of a knight, one that was dubbed by the royal sword?

Sup. Alas, sir, I warrant she has the courage of a countess; if she's once provoked, she cares not what she does in her passion; if you were ten times a knight she'd give you dub for dub, sir.

Sir Sol. Ah! Supple when her blood's up, I confess she's the devil; and I question if the whole conclave of cardinals could lay her. But suppose she should resolve to give me a sample of her sex, and make me a cuckold in cool blood?

Sup. Why, if she should, sir, don't take it so to heart; cuckolds are no such monsters now-a-days: in the city, you know, sir, it's so many honest men's fortune, that no body minds it there; and at this end of the town, a cuckold has as much respect as his wife, for aught I see; for gentlemen don't know but it may be their own case another day, and so people are willing to do as they would be done by.

Sir Sol. And yet I do not think but my spouse is honest—and think she is not——would I were satisfied.

Sup. Troth, sir, I don't know what to think, but in my conscience I believe good looking after her can do her no harm.

Sir Sol. Right, Supple; and in order to it, I'll first demolish her visiting days. For how do I know but

they may be so many private clubs for cuckoldom?

Sup. Ah, sir! your worship knows I was always against your coming to this end of the town.

Sir Sol. Thou wert indeed, my honest Supple: but woman! fair and faithless woman, wormed and worked me to her wishes;—like fond Mark Antony, I let my empire moulder from my hands, and gave up all for love.—I must have a young wife, with a murrian to me—I hate her too—and yet the devil on't is, I'm still jealous of her.—Stay! let me reckon up all the fashionable virtues she has that can make a man happy. In the first place—I think her very ugly.

Sup. Ah, that's because you are married to her, sir.

Sir Sol. As for her expences, no arithmetic can reach them; she's always longing for something dear and useless; she will certainly ruin me in china, silks, ribbands, fans, laces, perfumes, washes, powder, patches, jessamine gloves, and ratifia.

Sup. Ah, sir, that's a cruel liquor with them.

Sir Sol. To sum up all would run me mad.——The only way to put a stop to her career, must be to put off my coach, turn away her chairmen, lock out her Swiss porter, bar up the doors, keep out all visiters, and then she'll be less expensive.

Sup. Ay, sir, for few women think it worth their while to dress for their husbands.

Sir Sol. Then we shan't be plagued with my old Lady Tittle-tattle's howd'ye's in a morning, nor my Lady Dainty's spleen, or the sudden indisposition of that grim beast her horrible dutch mastiff.

Sup. No, sir, nor the impertinence of that great fat creature, my Lady Swill-Tea.

Sir Sol. And her squinting daughter.—No, Supple, after this night, nothing in petticoats shall come within ten yards of my doors.

Sup. Nor in breeches neither.

Sir Sol. Only Mr. Clerimont; for I expect him to sign articles with me for the five hundred pounds he is to give me, for that ungovernable jade my niece Clarinda.——But now to my own affairs. I'll step into the park, and see if I can meet with my hopeful spouse there. I warrant, engaged in some innocent freedom, as she calls it, as walking in a mask, to laugh at the impertinencies of fops that don't know her; but 'tis more likely, I'm afraid, a plot to intrigue with those that do. Oh, how many torments lie in the small circle of a wedding-ring. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

CLARINDA's *Apartment.* *Enter* CLARINDA *and* SYLVIA.

Clarinda.

HA, ha! poor Sylvia!

Syl. Nay, pr'ythee, don't laugh at me. There's no accounting for inclination: for if there were, you know, why should it be a greater folly in me, to fall in love with a man I never saw but once in my life, than it is in you to resist an honest gentleman, whose

fidelity has deserved your heart an hundred times over.

Clar. Ah, but an utter stranger, cousin, and one that, for aught you know, may be no gentleman.

Syl. That's impossible: his conversation could not be counterfeit. An elevated wit, and good breeding, have a natural lustre that's inimitable. Beside, he saved my life at the hazard of his own; so that part of what I give him, is but gratitude.

"*Clar.* Well;—you are the first woman that ever "took fire in the middle of the Thames, sure." But suppose now he is married, and has three or four children.

Syl. Psha! pr'ythee don't tease me with so many ill-natured objections. I tell you he is not married: I am sure he is not: for I never saw a face look more in humour in my life. Beside, he told me himself, he was a country gentleman, just come to town upon business: and I am resolved to believe him.

Clar. Well, well; I'll suppose you both as fit for one another as a couple of tallies. But, still, my dear, you know there's a surly old father's command against you; he is in articles to marry you to another: and though I know love is a notable contriver, I cann't see how you'll get over that difficulty.

Syl. 'Tis a terrible one, I own; but with a little of your assistance, dear Clarinda, I am still in hopes to bring it to an even wager, I prove as wise as my father.

Clar. Nay, you may be sure of me; you may see

by the management of my own amours, I have so natural a compassion for disobedience, I sha'n't be able to refuse you any thing in distress.—There's my hand; tell me how I can serve you?

Syl. Why thus:——because I would not wholly discover myself to him at once, I have sent him a note to visit me here, as if these lodgings were my own.

Clar. Hither! to my lodging! 'Twas well I sent Colonel Standfast word I should not be at home.

[*Aside.*

Syl. I hope you'll pardon my freedom, since one end of my taking it too, was to have your opinion of him before I engage any farther.

Clar. Oh, it needs no apology; any thing of mine is at your service.——I am only afraid my troublesome lover, Mr. Clerimont, should happen to see him, who is of late so impertinently jealous of a rival, though from what cause I know not——not but I lie too. [*Aside.*] I say, should he see him, your country gentleman would be in danger, I can tell you.

Syl. Oh, there's no fear of that; for I have ordered him to be brought in the back way: when I have talked with him a little alone, I'll find an occasion to leave him with you; and then we'll compare our opinions of him.

Enter a Servant to CLARINDA.

Serv. Madam, my Lady Sadlife. [*Exit.*

Syl. Psha! she here!

Clar. Don't be uneasy; she sha'n't disturb you; I'll take care of her.

Enter Lady SADLIFE.

L. Sad. Oh, my dears, you have lost the sweetest morning, sure, that ever peeped out of the firmament. The park never was in such perfection.

Clar. 'Tis always so when your ladyship's there.

L. Sad. 'Tis never so without my dear Clarinda.

Syl. How civilly we women hate one another! [*Aside.*] Was there a good deal of company, madam?

L. Sad. Abundance! and the best I have seen this season: for 'twas between twelve and one, the very hour you know when the mob are violently hungry. Oh, the air was so inspiring! so amorous! And to complete the pleasure, I was attacked in conversation by the most charming, modest, agreeably insinuating young fellow, sure, that ever woman played the fool with.

Clar. Who was it?

L. Sad. Nay, Heaven knows; his face is as entirely new as his conversation. What wretches our young fellows are to him!

Syl. What sort of a person?

L. Sad Tall, straight, well-limbed, walked firm, and a look as cheerful as a May-day morning.

Syl. The picture's very like: pray Heaven it is not my gentleman's! [*Aside.*

Clar. I wish this don't prove my colonel. [*Aside.*

Syl. How came you to part with him so soon?

L. Sad. Oh, name it not! that eternal damper of all pleasure, my husband, Sir Solomon, came into the Mall in the very crisis of our conversation.—I saw him at a distance, and complained that the air grew tainted, that I was sick o'th' sudden, and left him in such abruptness and confusion, as if he had been himself my husband.

Clar. A melancholy disappointment, indeed!

L. Sad. Oh, 'tis a husband's nature to give them.

A Servant enters and whispers SYLVIA.

Syl. Desire him to walk in.—Cousin, you'll be at hand.

Clar. In the next room.——Come, madam, Sylvia has a little business: I'll shew you some of the sweetest, pretiest figured china.

L. Sad. My dear, I wait on you.

[*Exeunt L.* Sad. *and* Clar.

Enter ATALL, *as Mr.* FREEMAN.

Syl. You find, sir, I have kept my word in seeing you; 'tis all you yet have asked of me; and when I know 'tis in my power to be more obliging, there's nothing you can command in honour I shall refuse you.

At. This generous offer, madam, is so high an obligation, that it were almost mean in me to ask a further favour. But 'tis a lover's merit to be a miser in his wishes, and grasp at all occasions to enrich

them. I own I feel your charms too sensibly prevail, but dare not give a loose to my ambitious thoughts, 'till I have passed one dreadful doubt that shakes them.

Syl. If 'tis in my power to clear it, ask me freely.

At. I tremble at the trial; and yet, methinks, my fears are vain: but yet to kill or cure them once for ever, be just and tell me——are you married?

Syl. If that can make you easy, no.

At. 'Tis ease indeed—nor are you promised, nor your heart engaged?

Syl. That's hard to tell you: but to be just, I own my father has engaged my person to one I never saw; and my heart I fear is inclining to one he never saw.

At. Oh, yet be merciful, and ease my doubt; tell me the happy man that has deserved so exquisite a blessing.

Syl. That, sir, requires some pause: first tell me why you're so inquisitive, without letting me know the condition of your own heart.

At. In every circumstance my heart's the same with yours; 'tis promised to one I never saw, by a commanding father, who, by my firm hopes of happiness, I am resolved to disobey, unless your cruelty prevents it.

Syl. But my disobedience would beggar me.

At. Banish that fear. I'm heir to a fortune will support you like yourself.—May I not know your family.

Syl. Yet you must not.

At. Why that nicety? Is not it in my power to inquire whose house this is when I am gone?

Syl. And be never the wiser. These lodgings are a friend's, and are only borrowed on this occasion: but to save you the trouble of any further needless questions, I will make you one proposal. I have a young lady here within, who is the only confident of my engagements to you: on her opinion I rely; nor can you take it ill, if I take no farther steps without it: 'twould be miserable indeed should we both meet beggars. I own your actions and appearance merit all you can desire; let her be as well satisfied of your pretensions and condition, and you shall find it sha'n't be a little fortune shall make me ungrateful.

At. So generous an offer exceeds my hopes.

Syl. Who's there?

Enter a Servant.

Desire my cousin Clarinda to walk in.

At. Ha! Clarinda! If it should be my Clarinda now, I'm in a sweet condition——by all that's terrible the very she!—this was finely contrived of fortune. [*Aside.*

Enter CLARINDA.

Clar. Defend me! Colonel Standfast!—She has certainly discovered my affairs with him, and has a mind to insult me by an affected resignation of her pretensions to him.—I'll disappoint her—I won't know him. [*Aside.*

Syl. Cousin, pray, come forward; this is the gentleman I am so much obliged to—sir, this lady is a relation of mine, and the person we were speaking of.

At. I shall be proud to be better known among any of your friends. [*Salutes her.*

Clar. Soh! he takes the hint, I see, and seems not to know me neither: I know not what to think—I am confounded!—I hate both him and her.—How unconcerned he looks! Confusion! he addresses her before my face.

Lady SADLIFE *peeping in.*

L. Sad. What do I see? The pleasant young fellow that talked with me in the park just now! This is the luckiest accident! I must know a little more of him. [*Retires.*

Syl. Cousin, and Mr. Freeman, I think I need not make any apology—you both know the occasion of my leaving you together—in a quarter of an hour I'll wait on you again. [*Exit* Syl.

At. So! I' in a hopeful way now, faith;—but buff's the word: I'll stand it.

Clar. Mr. Freeman! So, my gentleman has changed his name too! How harmless he looks!—I have my senses sure, and yet the demureness of that face looks as if he had a mind to persuade me out of them. I could find in my heart to humour his assurance, and see how far he'll carry it.—Will not you please to sit, sir? [*They sit.*

At. What the devil can this mean?—Sure she has

a mind to counterface me, and not know me too—— With all my heart: if her ladyship won't know me, I'm sure 'tis not my business at this time to know her. [*Aside.*

Clar. Certainly that face is cannon proof. [*Aside.*

At. Now for a formal speech, as if I had never seen her in my life before. [*Aside.*] Madam—a-hem! Madam—I—a-hem!

Clar. Curse of that steady face. [*Aside.*

At. I say, madam, since I am an utter stranger to you, I am afraid it will be very difficult for me to offer you more arguments than one to do me a friendship with your cousin; but if you are, as she seems to own you, her real friend, I presume you can't give her a better proof of your being so, than pleading the cause of a sincere and humble lover, whose tender wishes never can propose to taste of peace in life without her.

Clar. Umph! I'm choked. [*Aside.*

At. She gave me hopes, that when I had satisfied you of my birth and fortune, you would do me the honour to let me know her name and family.

Clar. Sir, I must own you are the most perfect master of your art, that ever entered the lists of assurance.

At. Madam,

Clar. And I don't doubt but you'll find it a much easier task to impose upon my cousin, than me.

At. Impose, madam! I should be sorry any thing I have said could disoblige you into such hard

thoughts of me. Sure, madam, you are under some misinformation.

Clar. I was indeed, but now my eyes are open; for, 'till this minute, I never knew that the gay Colonel Standfast, was the demure Mr. Freeman.

At. Colonel Standfast! This is extremely dark, madam.

Clar. This jest is tedious, sir—impudence grows dull, when 'tis so very extravagant.

At. Madam, I am a gentleman—but not yet wise enough, I find, to account for the humours of a fine lady.

Clar. Troth, sir, on second thoughts I begin to be a little better reconciled to your assurance; 'tis in some sort modesty to deny yourself; for to own your perjuries to my face, had been an insolence transcendently provoking.

At. Really, madam, my not being able to apprehend one word of all this, is a great inconvenience to my affair with your cousin: but if you will first do me the honour to make me acquainted with her name and family, I don't much care if I do take a little pains afterwards to come to a right understanding with you.

Clar. Come, come, since you see this assurance will do you no good, you had better put on a simple look, and generously confess your frailties: the same slyness that deceived me first, will still find me woman enough to pardon you.

At. That bite won't do [*Aside.*] Sure, madam, you mistake me for some other person.

Clar. Insolent! audacious villain! I am not to have my senses then!

At. No. [*Aside.*

Clar. And you are resolved to stand it to the last!

At. The last extremity. [*Aside.*

Clar. Well, sir, since you are so much a stranger to Colonel Standfast, I'll tell you where to find him, and tell him this from me; I hate him, scorn, detest, and loath him: I never meant him but at best for my diversion, and should he ever renew his dull addresses to me, I'll have him used as his vain insolence deserves. Now, sir, I have no more to say, and I desire you would leave the house immediately.

At. I would not willingly disoblige you, madam, but 'tis impossible to stir 'till I have seen your cousin, and cleared myself of these strange aspersions.

Clar. Don't flatter yourself, sir, with so vain a hope, for I must tell you, once for all, you've seen the last of her; and if you won't be gone, you'll oblige me to have you forced away.

At. I'll be even with you. [*Aside.*] Well, madam, since I find nothing can prevail upon your cruelty, I'll take my leave: but as you hope for justice on the man that wrongs you, at least be faithful to your lovely friend. And when you have named to her my utmost guilt, yet paint my passion as it is, sincere. Tell her what tortures I endured in this severe ex-

clusion from her sight, that till my innocence is clear to her, and she again receives me into mercy,

A madman's frenzy's heav'n to what I feel;
The wounds you give 'tis she alone can heal. [Exit.

Clar. Most abandoned impudence! And yet I know not which vexes me most, his out-facing my senses, or his insolent owning his passion for my cousin to my face: 'tis impossible she could put him upon this, it must be all his own; but be it as it will, by all that's woman I'll have revenge. [*Exit.*

Re-enter ATALL *and Lady* SADLIFE *at the other side.*

At. Hey-day! is there no way down stairs here? Death! I cann't find my way out! This is the oddest house——

L. Sad. Here he is—I'll venture to pass by him.

At. Pray, madam, which is the nearest way out?

L. Sad. Sir, out——a——

At. Oh, my stars! is't you, madam, this is fortunate indeed—I beg you'll tell me, do you live here, madam?

L. Sad. Not very far off, sir: but this is no place to talk with you alone—indeed I must beg your pardon.

At. By all those kindling charms that fire my soul, no consequence on earth shall make me quit my hold, till you've given me some kind assurance that I shall see you again, and speedily; 'egad I'll have one out of the family at least.

L. Sad. Oh, good, here's company!

At. Oh, do not rack me with delays, but quick, before this dear short-lived opportunity's lost, inform me where you live, or kill me: to part with this soft white hand is ten thousand daggers to my heart.

[*Kissing it eagerly.*

L. Sad. Oh, lud! I am going home this minute; and if you should offer to dog my chair, I protest I ——was ever such usage——lord——sure! Oh—follow me down then. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter CLARINDA, *and* SYLVIA.

Syl. Ha, ha, ha!

Clar. Nay, you may laugh, madam, but what I tell you is true.

Syl. Ha, ha, ha!

Clar. You don't believe then?

Syl. I do believe, that when some women are inclined to like a man, nothing more palpably discovers it, than their railing at him; ha, ha!—Your pardon, cousin; you know you laughed at me just now upon the same occasion.

Clar. The occasion's quite different, madam; I hate him. And, once more I tell you, he's a villain, you're imposed on. He's a colonel of foot, his regiment's now in Spain, and his name's Standfast.

Syl. But pray, good cousin, whence had you this intelligence of him?

Clar. From the same place that you had your false account madam, his own mouth.

Syl. What was his business with you?

Clar. Much about the same, as his business with you——love.

Syl. Love! to you!

Clar. Me, madam! Lord, what am I? Old, or a monster! Is it so prodigious that a man should like me?

Syl. No! but I'm amazed to think, if he had liked you, he should leave you so soon, for me!

Clar. For you! leave me for you! No, madam, I did not tell you that neither! ha, ha!

Syl. No! What made you so violently angry with him then? Indeed, cousin, you had better take some other fairer way; this artifice is much too weak to make me break with him. But, however, to let you see I can be still a friend; prove him to be what you say he is, and my engagements with him shall soon be over.

Clar. Look you, madam, not but I slight the tenderest of his addresses; but to convince you that my vanity was not mistaken in him, I'll write to him by the name of Colonel Standfast, and do you the same by that of Freeman; and let's each appoint him to meet us at my Lady Sadlife's at the same time: if these appear two different men; I think our dispute's easily at an end; if but one, and he does not own all I have said of him to your face, I'll make you a very humble curtesy, and beg your pardon.

Syl. And if he does own it, I'll make your ladyship the same reverence, and beg yours.

Enter CLERIMONT.

Clar. Psha! he here!

Cler. I am glad to find you in such good company, madam.

Clar. One's seldom long in good company, sir.

Cler. I am sorry mine has been so troublesome of late; but I value your ease at too high a rate, to disturb it. [*Going.*

Syl. Nay, Mr. Clerimont, upon my word you sha'n't stir. Hark you—[*Whispers.*] Your pardon, cousin.

Clar. I must not lose him neither—Mr. Clerimont's way is, to be severe in his construction of people's meaning.

Syl. I'll write my letter, and be with you, cousin. [*Exit.*

Cler. It was always my principle, madam, to have an humble opinion of my merit; when a woman of sense frowns upon me, I ought to think I deserve it.

Clar. But to expect to be always received with a smile, I think, is having a very extraordinary opinion of one's merit.

Cler. We differ a little as to fact, madam: for these ten day's past, I have had no distinction, but a severe reservedness. You did not use to be so sparing of your good-humour; and while I see you gay to all the world but me, I cannot but be a little concerned at the change.

Clar. If he has discovered the colonel now, I'm undone! he could not meet him, sure.——I must hu-

mour him a little. [*Aside.*] Men of your sincere temper, Mr. Clerimont, I own, don't always meet with the usage they deserve: but women are giddy things, and had we no errors to answer for, the use of good-nature in a lover would be lost. Vanity is our inherent weakness: you must not chide, if we are sometimes fonder of your passions than your prudence.

Cler. This friendly condescension makes me more your slave than ever. Oh, yet be kind, and tell me, have I been tortured with a groundless jealousy?

Clar. Let your own heart be judge—but don't take it ill if I leave you now—I have some earnest business with my cousin Sylvia: but to-night at my Lady Dainty's I'll make you amends; you'll be there.

Cler. I need not promise you.

Clar. Your servant.—Ah, how easily is poor sincerity imposed on! Now for the colonel. [*Aside. Exit.*

Cler. This unexpected change of humour more stirs my jealousy than all her late severity.—I'll watch her close;

For she that from a just reproach is kind,
Gives more suspicion of her guilty mind,
And throws her smiles, like dust, to strike the lover blind.

[Exit.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Lady DAINTY's *Apartment: a Table, with Phials, Gallipots, Glasses, &c. Lady* DAINTY, *and* SITUP *her Woman.*

Lady Dainty.

SITUP! Situp!

Sit. Madam!

L. Dain. Thou art strangely slow; I told thee the hartshorn; I have the vapours to that degree!

Sit. If you ladyship would take my advice you should e'en fling your physic out of the window; if you were not in perfect health in three days, I'd be bound to be sick for you.

L. Dain. Peace, goody impertinence! I tell thee, no woman of quality is, or should be in perfect health ——Huh, huh! [*Coughs faintly.*] To be always in health is as vulgar as to be always in humour, and would equally betray one's want of wit and breeding: ——where are the fellows?

Sit. Here, Madam——

Enter two Footmen.

L. Dain Cæsar!—run to my Lady Roundsides; desire to know how she rested; and tell her the violence of my cold is abated: huh, huh! Pompey, step you to my Lady Killchairman's; give my service; say, I have been so embarrassed with the spleen all this

morning, that I am under the greatest uncertainty in the world, whether I shall be able to stir out or no—And, d'ye hear; desire to know how my lord does, and the new monkey—— [*Exeunt Footmen.*

Sir. In my conscience, these great ladies make themselves sick to make themselves business; and are well or ill, only in ceremony to one another. [*Aside.*

L. Dain. Where's t'other fellow?

Sir. He is not returned yet, madam.

L. Dain. 'Tis indeed a strange lump, not fit to carry a disease to any body; I sent him t'other day to the Dutchess of Diet-Drink with the cholic, and the brute put it into his own tramontane language, and called it the belly-ach.

Sir. I wish your ladyship had not occasion to send for any; for my part——

L. Dain. Thy part!——pr'ythee, thou wert made of the rough masculine kind; 'tis betraying our sex not to be sickly and tender. All the families I visit have something derived to them from the elegant nice state of indisposition; you see, even in the men, a genteel, as it were, stagger, or twine of the bodies; as if they were not yet confirmed enough for the rough laborious exercise of walking, "a lazy saunter "in their motion, something so quality! and their "voices so soft and low, you'd think they were fall-"ing asleep, they are so very delicate.

"*Sir.* But, methinks, madam, it would be better if "the men were not altogether so tender.

"*L. Dain.* Indeed, I have sometimes wished the "creatures were not, but that the niceness of their "frame so much distinguishes them from the herd of "common people:" nay, even most of their diseases, you see, are not prophaned by the crowd: the apoplexy, the gout, and vapours, are all peculiar to the nobility.——Huh, huh! and I could almost wish, that colds were only ours;——there's something in them so genteel, so agreeably disordering——huh, huh!

Sit. That, I hope, I shall never be fit for them—Your ladyship forgot the spleen.

L. Dain. Oh!——my dear spleen——I grudge that even to some of us.

Sit. I knew an ironmonger's wife, in the city, that was mightily troubled with it.

L. Dain. Foh! What a creature hast thou named! An ironmonger's wife have the spleen! Thou mightest as well have said her husband was a fine gentleman——Give me something.

Sit. Will your ladyship please to take any of the steel drops? or the bolus? or the electuary? or——

L. Dain. This wench will smother me with questions——huh, huh! bring any of them——these healthy sluts are so boisterous, they split one's brains: I fancy myself in an inn while she talks to me; I must have some decayed person of quality about me; for the commons of England are the strangest creatures ——huh, huh!

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mrs. Sylvia, madam, is come to wait on your ladyship.

L. Dain. Desire her to walk in; let the physic alone: I'll take a little of her company; she's mighty good for the spleen.

Enter SYLVIA.

Syl. Dear Lady Dainty!

L. Dain. My good creature, I'm overjoyed to see you—huh, huh!

Syl. I am sorry to see your ladyship wrapt up thus; I was in hopes to have had your company to the Indian house.

L. Dain. If any thing could tempt me abroad, 'twould be that place, and such agreeable company; but how came you, dear Sylvia, to be reconciled to any thing in an Indian house? you used to have a most barbarous inclination for our own odious manufactures.

Syl. Nay, madam, I am only going to recruit my tea-table: as to the rest of their trumpery, I am as much out of humour with it as ever.

L. Dain. Well, thou art a pleasant creature, thy distaste is so diverting.

Syl. And your ladyship is so expensive, that really I am not able to come into it.

L. Dain. Now it is to me prodigious! how some

women can muddle away their money upon housewifery, children, books, and charities, when there are so many well-bred ways, and foreign curiosities, that more elegantly require it—I have every morning the rarities of all countries brought to me, and am in love with every new thing I see.—Are the people come yet, Situp?

Sit. They have been below, madam, this half hour.

L. Dain. Dispose them in the parlour, and we'll be there presently. [*Exit.* Situp.

Syl. How can your ladyship take such pleasure in being cheated with the baubles of other countries?

L. Dain. Thou art a very infidel to all finery.

Syl. And you are a very bigot—

L. Dain. A person of all reason, and no complaisance.

Syl. And your ladyship all complaisance, and no reason.

L. Dain. Follow me, and be converted. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter SITUP, *a Woman with China Ware; an Indian Man with Screens, Tea, &c. a Birdman with a Paroquet, Monkey, &c.*

Sit. Come, come into this room.

Chi. I hope your ladyship's lady won't be long in coming.

Sit. I don't care if she never comes to you.——It seems you trade with the ladies for old clothes, and give them china for their gowns and petticoats; I'm

like to have a fine time on't with such creatures as you indeed!

Chi. Alas, madam, I'm but a poor woman, and am forced to do any thing to live: will your ladyship be pleased to accept of a piece of china?

Sit. Puh! no;—I don't care.—Though I must needs say you look like an honest woman.

[*Looking on it.*

Chi. Thank you, good madam.

Sit. Our places are like to come to a fine pass indeed, if our ladies must buy their china with our perquisites: at this rate, my lady sha'n't have an old fan, or a glove! but———

Chi. Pray, madam, take it.

Sit. No, not I; I won't have it, especially without a saucer to't. Here, take it again.

Chi. Indeed you shall accept of it.

Sit. Not I, truly—come, give it me, give it me;—here's my lady.

Enter Lady DAINTY, *and* SYLVIA.

L. Dain. Well, my dear, is not this a pretty sight now?

Syl. It's better than so many doctors and apothecaries, indeed.

L. Dain. All trades must live, you know; and those no more than these could subsist, if the world were all wise, or healthy.

Syl. I am afraid our real diseases are but few to our

imaginary, and doctors get more by the sound than the sickly.

L. Dain. My dear, you're allowed to say any thing—but now I must talk with the people.——Have you got any thing new there?

Chi. Ind. and Bird. Yes, an't please your ladyship.

L. Dain. One at once.——

Bird. I have brought your ladyship the finest monkey——

Syl. What a filthy thing it is!

L. Dain. Now I think he looks very humourous and agreeable—I vow in a white perriwig he might do mischief. Could he but talk and take snuff, there's ne'er a fop in town would go beyond him.

Syl. Most fops would go farther if they did not speak; but talking, indeed, makes them very often worse company than monkies.

L. Dain. Thou pretty little picture of man!—— How very Indian he looks!——*I could kiss the dear* creature!

Syl. Ah, don't touch him! he'll bite!

Bird. No, madam, he is the tamest you ever saw, and the least mischievous.

L. Dain. Then take him away, I won't have him; for mischief is the wit of a monkey; and I would not give a farthing for one that would not break me three or four pounds worth of china in a morning. Oh, I am in love with these Indian figures!—Do but ob-

serve what an innocent natural simplicity there is in all the actions of them.

Chi. These are Pagods, madam, that the Indians worship.

L. Dain. So far I am an Indian.

Syl. Now to me they are all monsters.

L. Dain. Profane creature!

Chi. Is your ladyship for a piece of right Flanders lace?

L. Dain. Um—no; I don't care for it, now it is not prohibited.

Ind. Will your ladyship be pleased to have a pound of fine tea?

L. Dain. What, filthy, odious bohea, I suppose?

Ind. No, madam; right Kappakawawa.

L. Dain. Well, there's something in the very sound of that name, that makes it irresistible.——What is it a pound?

Ind. But six guineas, madam.

L. Dain. How infinitely cheap! I'll buy it all—— Situp, take the man in and pay him, and let the rest call again to-morrow.

Omnes. Bless your ladyship.

[*Exeunt* Sit. Chi. Ind. *and* Bird.

L. Dain. Lord, how feverish I am!—the least motion does so disorder me—do but feel me.

Syl. No, really, I think you are in very good temper.

L. Dain. Burning, indeed, child.

Enter Servant, Doctor, and Apothecary.

Serv. Madam, here's Doctor Bolus, and the apothecary. [*Exit.*

L. Dain. Oh, doctor, I'm glad you're come; one is not sure of a moment's life without you.

Dr. How did your ladyship rest, madam?

[*Feels her pulse.*

L. Dain. Never worse, indeed, doctor: I once fell into a little slumber, indeed, but then was disturbed by the most odious, frightful dream, that if the fright had not wakened me, I had certainly perished in my sleep, with the apprehension.

Dr. A certain sign of a disordered brain, madam; but I'll order something that shall compose your ladyship.

L. Dain. Mr. Rhubarb, I must quarrel with you ——you don't disguise your medicines enough; they taste all physic.

Rhub. To alter it more might offend the operation, madam.

L. Dain. I don't care what is offended, so my taste is not.

Dr. Hath your ladyship, Mr Rhubarb, withdraw the medicine, rather than to make it pleasant: I'll find a reason for the want of its operation.

Rhub. But, sir, if we don't look about us, she'll grow well upon our hands.

Dr. Never fear that; she's too much a woman of

quality to dare to be well without her doctor's opinion.

Rhub. Sir, we have drained the whole catalogue of diseases already; there's not another left to put in her head.

Dr. Then I'll make her go them over again.

Enter CARELESS.

Care. So, here's the old levee, doctor and apothecary in close consultation! Now will I demolish the quack and his medicines before her face.—Mr. Rhubarb, your servant. Pray what have you got in your hand there?

Rhub. Only a julep and composing draught for my lady, sir.

Care. Have you so, sir? Pray, let me see—I'll prescribe to-day. Doctor, you may go—the lady shall take no physic at present but me.

Dr. Sir——

Care. Nay, if you won't believe me——

[*Breaks the phials.*

L. Dain. Ah!—— [*Frighted, and leaning upon* Syl.

Dr. Come away, Mr. Rhubarb—he'll certainly put her out of order, and then she'll send for us again. [*Exit Dr. and Apoth.*

Care. You see, madam, what pains I take to come into your favour.

L. Dain. You take a very preposterous way, I can tell you, sir.

Care. I cann't tell how I succeed, but I am sure I

endeavour right; for I study every morning new impertinence to entertain you: for since I find nothing but dogs, doctors, and monkies are your favourites, it is very hard if your ladyship won't admit me as one of the number.

L. Dain. When I find you of an equal merit with my monkey, you shall be in the same state of favour. I confess, as a proof of your wit, you have done me as much mischief here. But you have not half pug's judgment, nor his spirit; for the creature will do a world of pleasant things, without caring whether one likes them or not.

Care. Why, truly, madam, the little gentleman, my rival, I believe, is much in the right on't: and, if you observe, I have taken as much pains of late to disoblige, as to please you.

L. Dain. You succeed better in one than t'other I can tell you, sir.

Care. I am glad on't; for if you had not me now and then to plague you, what would you do for a pretence to be chagrined, to faint, have the spleen, the vapours, and all those modish disorders that so nicely distinguish a woman of quality?

L. Dain. I am perfectly confounded!—Certainly there are some people too impudent for our resentment.

Care. Modesty's a starving virtue, madam, an old threadbare fashion of the last age, and would sit as oddly on a lover now, as a picked beard and mustachios.

L. Dain. Most astonishing!

Care. I have tried sighing and looking silly a great while, but 'twould not do—nay, had you had as little wit as good-nature, should have proceeded to dance and sing. Tell me but how, what face or form can worship you; and behold your votary.

L. Dain. Not, sir, as the Persians do the sun, with your face towards me. The best proof you can give me of your horrid devotion, is never to see me more. Come, my dear. [*Exit with* Sylvia.

Syl. I'm amazed so much assurance should not succeed. [*Exit.*

Care. All this sha'n't make me out of love with my virtue. Impudence has ever been a successful quality, and 'twould be hard, indeed, if I should be the first that did not thrive by it. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

CLERIMONT's *Lodgings.* *Enter* ATALL, *and* FINDER, *his Man.*

At. You are sure you know the house again?

Fin. Ah, as well as I do the upper gallery, sir.—'Tis Sir Solomon Sadlife's, at the two glass lanthorns, within three doors of my Lord Duke's.

At. Very well, sir—then take this letter, enquire for my Lady Sadlife's woman, and stay for an answer.

Fin. Yes, sir. [*Exit.*

At. Well, I find 'tis as ridiculous to propose plea-

sure in love without variety of mistresses, as to pretend to be a keen sportsman without a good stable of horses. How this lady may prove I cann't tell; but if she is not a deedy tit at the bottom, I'm no jockey.

Re-enter FINDER.

Fin. Sir, here are two letters for you.

At. Who brought them?

Fin. A couple of footmen, and they both desire an answer.

At. Bid them stay, and do you make haste where I ordered you.

Fin. Yes, sir. [*Exit.*

At. To Col. Standfast—that's Clarinda's hand—To Mr. Freeman—that must be my incognita. Ah, I have most mind to open this first;—but if t'other malicious creature should have perverted her growing inclination to me, 'twould put my whole frame in a trembling——Hold, I'll guess my fate by degrees—this may give me a glimpse of it. [*Reads* Clarinda's *letter.*] Um—um—um—Ha! To meet her at my Lady Sadlife's at seven o'clock to-night, and take no manner of notice of my late disowning myself to her—Something's at the bottom of all this.——Now to solve the riddle. [*Reads the other letter.*] 'My cousin Clarinda has told some things of you that very much 'alarm me; but I am willing to suspend my belief 'of them till I see you, which I desire may be at my 'Lady Sadlife's at seven this evening.'—The devil!

the same place!—'As you value the real friendship 'of your Incognita.'

So, now the riddle's out—the rival queens are fairly come to a reference, and one or both of them I must lose, that's positive.——Hard!

Enter CLERIMONT.

Hard fortune! Now, poor Impudence, what will become of thee? Oh, Clerimont, such a complication of adventures since I saw thee! such sweet hopes, fears, and unaccountable difficulties, sure never poor dog was surrounded with.

Cler. Oh, you are an industrious person! you'll get over them. But, pray, let's hear.

At. To begin, then, in the climax of my misfortunes:—In the first place, the private lodgings that my incognita appointed to receive me in, prove to be the very individual habitation of my other mistress, whom (to complete the blunder of my ill luck) she civilly introduced in person, to recommend me to her better acquaintance.

Cler. Ha, ha! Death! how could you stand them both together?

At. The old way—buff—I stuck like a burr to my name of Freeman, addressed my incognita before the other's face, and with a most unmoved good-breeding, harmlessly faced her down I had never seen her in my life before.

Cler. The prettiest modesty I ever heard of! Well, but how did they discover you at last?

At. Why, faith, the matter's yet in suspence; and I find by both their letters, that they don't yet well know what to think: (but, to go on with my luck) you must know, they have since both appointed me, by several names, to meet them at one and the same place, at seven o'clock this evening.

Cler. Ah!

At. And, lastly, to crown my fortune (as if the devil himself most triumphantly rode a-straddle upon my ruin) the fatal place of their appointment happens to be the very house of a third lady, with whom I made an acquaintance since morning, and had just before sent word I would visit near the same hour this evening.

Cler. Oh, murder! Poor Atall, thou art really fallen under the last degree of compassion.

At. And yet, with a little of thy assistance, in the middle of their small-shot, I don't still despair of holding my head above water.

Cler. Death! but you cann't meet them both; you must lose one of them, unless you can split yourself.

At. Pr'ythee, don't suspect my courage or my modesty; for I'm resolved to go on, if you will stand by me.

Cler. Faith, my very curiosity would make me do that. But what can I do?

At. You must appear for me, upon occasion, in person.

Cler. With all my heart. What else?

At. I shall want a queen's messenger in my interest, or rather one that can personate one.

Cler. That's easily found—But what to do?

At. Come along, and I'll tell you; for first I must answer their letters.

Cler. Thou art an original, faith. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Changes to Sir SOLOMON*'s House. Enter Sir* SOLOMON *leading Lady* SADLIFE, *and* WISHWELL, *her Woman.*

Sir Sol. There, madam, let me have no more of these airings.—No good, I am sure, can keep a woman five or six hours abroad in a morning.

L. Sad. You deny me all the innocent freedoms of life.

Sir Sol. Ha! you have the modish cant of this end of the town, I see; intriguing, gaming, gadding, and party-quarries, with a pox to them, are innocent freedoms, forsooth!

L. Sad. I don't know what you mean; I'm sure I have not one acquaintance in the world that does an ill thing.

Sir Sol. They must be better looked after than your ladyship then; but I'll mend my hands as fast as I can. Do you look to your reputation henceforward, and I'll take care of your person.

L. Sad. You wrong my virtue with these unjust suspicions.

Sir Sol. Ay, it's no matter for that; better I wrong it than you. I'll secure my doors for this day at least. [*Exit.*

L. Sad. Oh, Wishwell! what shall I do?

Wish. What's the matter, madam?

L. Sad. I expect a letter from a gentleman every minute; and if it should fall into Sir Solomon's hands, I'm ruined past redemption.

Wish. He won't suspect it, madam, sure, if they are directed to me, as they used to be.

L. Sad. But his jealousy's grown so violent of late, there's no trusting to it now. If he meets it, I shall be locked up for ever.

Wish. Oh, dear madam! I vow your ladyship frights me—Why, he'll kill me for keeping counsel.

L. Sad. Run to the window, quick, and watch the messenger. [*Exit* Wish.] Ah, there's my ruin near! —I feel it—[*A knocking at the door.*]——What shall I do? Be very insolent, or very humble, and cry?—I have known some women, upon these occasions, outstrut their husbands' jealousy, and make them ask pardon for finding them out. Oh, lud, here he comes! —I cann't do't; my courage fails me——I must e'en stick to my handkerchief, and trust to nature.

Re-enter Sir SOLOMON, *taking a Letter from* FINDER.

Sir Sol. Sir, I shall make bold to read this letter; and if you have a mind to save your bones, there's your way out.

'*Fin.* Oh, terrible! I sha'n't have a whole one in my skin, when I come home to my master. [*Exit.*

L. Sad. [*Aside.*] I'm lost for ever!

Sir Sol. [*Reads.*] 'Pardon, most divine creature, the impatience of my heart,'—Very well! these are her innocent freedoms! Ah, cockatrice!—'which languishes for an opportunity to convince you of its sincerity;'——Oh, the tender son of a whore!——'which nothing could relieve, but the sweet hope of seeing you this evening.'—Poor lady, whose virtue I have wronged with unjust suspicions!

L. Sad. I'm ready to sink with apprehension.

Sir Sol. [*Reads.*] 'To-night, at seven, expect your dying Strephon.'—Die, and be damn'd; for I'll remove your comforter, by cutting her throat. I could find in my heart to ram his impudent letter into her windpipe——Ha! what's this!——'To Mrs. Wishwell, my Lady Sadlife's woman.'——Ad, I'm glad of it, with all my heart! What a happy thing it is to have one's jealousy disappointed!—Now have I been cursing my poor wife for the mistaken wickedness of that trollop. 'Tis well I kept my thoughts to myself: for the virtue of a wife, when wrongfully accused, is most unmercifully insolent. Come, I'll do a great thing; I'll kiss her, and make her amends——What's the matter, my dear? Has any thing frighted you?

L. Sad. Nothing but your hard usage.

Sir Sol. Come, come, dry thy tears; it shall be so no more. But, hark ye, I have made a discovery

here—Your Wishwell, I'm afraid, is a slut; she has an intrigue.

L. Sad. An intrigue! Heavens, in our family!

Sir Sol. Read there—I wish she be honest.

L. Sad. How!——If there be the least ground to think it, Sir Solomon, positively she sha'n t stay a minute in the house—Impudent creature!—have an affair with a man!

Sir Sol. But hold, my dear; don't let your virtue censure too severely neither.

L. Sad. I shudder at the thoughts of her.

Sir Sol. Patience, I say—How do we know but his courtship may be honourable?

L. Sad. That, indeed, requires some pause.

Wish. [*Peeping in.*] So, all's safe, I see—He thinks the letter's to me——Oh, good madam! that letter was to me, the fellow says. I wonder, sir, how you could serve one so! If my sweetheart should hear you had opened it, I know he would not have me, so he would not.

Sir Sol. Never fear that; for if he is in love with you, he's too much a fool to value being laughed at.

L. Sad. If it be yours, here, take your stuff; and next time, bid him take better care, than to send his letter so publicly.

Wish. Yes, madam. But now your ladyship has read it, I'd fain beg the honour of Sir Solomon to answer it for me; for I cann't write.

L. Sad. Not write!

Sir Sol. Nay, he thinks she's above that, I suppose;

for he calls her divine creature——A pretty piece of divinity, truly!——But, come, my dear; 'egad, we'll answer it for her. Here's paper——you shall do it.

L. Sad. I, Sir Solomon! Lard, I won't write to fellows, not I——I hope he won't take me at my word. [*Aside.*

Sir Sol. Nay, you shall do it. Come, it will get her a good husband.

Wish. Ay, pray good madam, do.

Sir Sol. Ah, how eager the jade is!

L. Sad. I cann't tell how to write to any body but you, my dear.

Sir Sol. Well, well, I'll dictate then. Come, begin.

L. Sad. Lard, this is the oddest fancy!——

[*Sits to write.*

Sir Sol. Come, come——Dear sir—(for we'll be as loving as he, for his ears.)

Wish. No, pray madam, begin, Dear honey, or, My dearest angel.

L. Sad. Out, you fool! you must not be so fond—Dear sir, is very well. [*Writes.*

Sir Sol. Ay, ay, so 'tis; but these young fillies are for setting out at the top of their speed. But, pr'ythee, Wishwell, what is thy lover; for the stile of his letter may serve for a countess?

Wish. Sir, he's but a butler at present; but he's a good schollard, as you may see by his hand-writing; and in time may come to be a steward; and then we sha'n't be long without a coach, sir.

L. Sad. Dear sir——What must I write next?

Sir Sol. Why—— [*Musing.*

Wish. Hoping you are in good health, as I am at this present writing.

Sir Sol. You puppy, he'll laugh at you.

Wish. I'm sure my mother used to begin all her letters so.

Sir Sol. And thou art every inch of thee her own daughter, that I'll say for thee.

L. Sad. Come, I have done it. [*Reads.*] 'Dear sir, She must have very little merit that is insensible of yours.'

Sir Sol. Very well, faith! Write all yourself.

Wish. Ay, good madam, do; that's better than mine. But, pray, dear madam, let it end with, So I rest your dearest loving friend, till death us do part.

L. Sad. [*Aside.*] This absurd slut will make me laugh out.

Sir Sol. But, hark you, hussy; suppose now you should be a little scornful and insolent to shew your breeding, and a little ill-natured in it to shew your wit.

Wish. Ay, sir, that is, if I designed him for my gallant; but since he is to be but my husband, I must be very good-natured and civil before I have him, and huff him, and shew my wit after.

Sir Sol. Here's a jade for you! [*Aside.*] But why must you huff your husband, hussy?

Wish. Oh, sir, that's to give him a good opinion of my virtue! for you know, sir, a husband cann't think

one could be so very domineering, if one were not very honest.

Sir Sol. 'Sbud, this fool, on my conscience, speaks the sense of the whole sex! [*Aside.*

Wish. Then, sir, I have been told, that a husband loves one the better, the more one hectors him; as a spaniel does, the more one beats him.

Sir Sol. Ha! thy husband will have a blessed time on't.

L. Sad. So——I have done.

Wish. Oh, pray madam, read it!

L. Sad. [*Reads.*] 'Dear Sir—She must have very little merit that is insensible of yours; and while you continue to love, and tell me so, expect whatever you can hope from so much wit, and such unfeigned sincerity——At the hour you mention, you will be truly welcome to your passionate——'

Wish. Oh, madam, it is not half kind enough! Pray, put in some more dears.

Sir Sol. Ay, ay, sweeten it well; let it be all syrup, with a pox to her.

Wish. Every line should have a dear sweet sir in it, so it should——he'll think I don't love him else.

Sir Sol. Poor moppet!

L. Sad. No, no, 'tis better now—Well, what must be at the bottom, to answer Strephon?

Sir Sol. Pray, let her divine ladyship sign Abigail.

Wish. No, pray, madam, put down Lipsamintha.

Sir Sol. Lipsamintha!

L. Sad. No, come, I'll write Celia. Here, go in and seal it.

Sir Sol. Ay, come, I'll lend you a wafer, that he may'n't wait for your divinityship.

Wish. Pshaw! you always flout one so

[*Exeunt* Sir Sol. *and* Wish.

L. Sad. So, this is luckily over——Well, I see, a woman should never be discouraged from coming off at the greatest plunge; for though I was half dead with the fright, yet, now I am a little recovered, I find——

That apprehension does the bliss endear;
The real danger's nothing to the fear. [Exit.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Sir SOLOMON'*s*. *Enter Lady* SADLIFE, ATALL, *and* WISHWELL, *with lights*.

Lady Sadlife.

THIS room, I think, is pleasanter; if you please, we'll sit here, sir——Wishwell, shut the door, and take the key o'th' inside, and set chairs.

Wish. Yes, madam.

L. Sad. Lard, sir, what a strange opinion you must have of me, for receiving your visits upon so slender an acquaintance.

At. I have a much stranger opinion, madam, of your ordering your servant to lock herself in with us.

L. Sad. Oh, you would not have us wait upon ourselves!

At. Really, madam, I cann't conceive that two lovers, alone, have much occasion for attendance.

[*They sit.*

L. Sad. Lovers! Lard, how you talk! Cann't people converse without that stuff?

At. Um—Yes, madam, people may; but without a little of that stuff, conversation is generally very apt to be insipid.

L. Sad. Pooh! why, we can say any thing without her hearing, you see.

At. Ay; but if we should talk ourselves up to an occasion of being without her, it would look worse to send her out, than to have let her wait without when she was out.

L. Sad. You are pretty hard to please, I find, sir. Some men, I believe, would think themselves well used in so free a reception as yours.

At. Ha! I see this is like to come to nothing this time; so I'll e'en put her out of humour, that I may get off in time to my incognita. [*Aside.*] Really, madam, I can never think myself free, where my hand and my tongue are tied. [*Pointing to* Wish.

L. Sad. Your conversation, I find, is very different from what it was, sir.

At. With submission, madam, I think it very proper for the place we are in. If you had sent for me only to sip tea, to sit still, and be civil, with my hat under my arm, like a strange relation from Ireland, or so, why was I brought hither with so much caution and privacy? [*Sir* Solomon *knocks at the door.*

Wish. Oh, heavens, my master, madam!

Sir Sol. [*Within.*] Open the door there!

L. Sad. What shall we do?

At. Nothing now, I'm sure.

L. Sad. Open the door, and say the gentleman came to you.

Wish. Oh, lud, madam, I shall never be able to manage it at so short a warning!——We had better shut the gentleman into the closet, and say he came to nobody at all.

L. Sad. In, in then, for mercy's sake, quickly, sir!

At. So—this is like to be very pretty business!——Oh, success and impudence, thou hast quite forsaken me! [*Enters the closet.*

Wish. Do you step into your bed-chamber, madam, and leave my master to me. [*Exit* Lady Sadlife.

WISHWELL *opens the door, and Sir* SOLOMON *enters.*

Sir Sol. What's the reason, mistress, I am to be locked out of my wife's apartment?

Wish. My lady was washing her—her—neck, sir, and I could not come any sooner.

Sir Sol. I'm sure I heard a man's voice. [*Aside.*] Bid your lady come hither. [*Exit* Wishwell.]——He must be hereabouts——'tis so; all's out, all's over now: the devil has done his worst, and I am a cuckold in spite of my wisdom. 'Sbud! now an Italian would poison his wife for this, a Spaniard would stab her, and a Turk would cut off her head with a scymitar; but a poor dog of an English cuckold now can

only squabble and call names——Hold, here she comes——I must smother my jealousy, that her guilt mayn't be upon its guard.

Enter Lady SADLIFE *and* WISHWELL.

Sir Sol. My dear, how do you do? Come hither, and kiss me.

L. Sad. I did not expect you home so soon, my dear.

Sir Sol. Poor rogue!——I don't believe you did, with a pox to you. [*Aside.*] Wishwell, go down; I have business with your lady.

Wish. Yes, sir—but I'll watch you; for I am afraid this good-humour has mischief at the bottom of it.

[*Retires.*

L. Sad. I scarce know whether he's jealous or not.

Sir Sol. Now dare not I go near that closet door, lest the murderous dog should poke a hole in my guts through the key-hole.——Um——I have an old thought in my head——ay, and that will discover the whole bottom of her affair. 'Tis better to seem not to know one's dishonour, when one has not courage enough to revenge it.

L. Sad. I don't like his looks, methinks.

Sir Sol. Odso! what have I forgot now? Pr'ythee, my dear, step into my study; for I am so weary! and in the uppermost parcel of letters, you'll find one that I received from Yorkshire to-day, in the scru-

toir; bring it down, and some paper; I will answer it while I think on't.

L. Sad. If you please to lend me your key—But had you not better write in your study, my dear?

Sir Sol. No, no; I tell you, I'm so tired, I am not able to walk. There, make haste.

L. Sad. Would all were well over! [*Exit.*

Sir Sol. 'Tis so, by her eagerness to be rid of me. Well, since I find I dare not behave myself like a man of honour in this business, I'll at least act like a person of prudence and penetration; for say, should I clap a brace of slugs now in the very bowels of this rascal, it may hang me; but if it does not, it cann't divorce me. No, I'll e'en put out the candles, and in a soft, gentle whore's voice, desire the gentleman to walk about his business; and if I can get him out before my wife returns, I'll fairly post myself in his room; and so, when she comes to set him at liberty, in the dark, I'll humour the cheat, till I draw her into some casual confession of the fact, and then this injured front shall bounce upon her like a thunder-bolt. [*Puts out the candles.*

Wish. [*Behind.*] Say you so, sir? I'll take care my lady shall be provided for you. [*Exit.*

Sir Sol. Hist, hist, sir, sir!

Enter ATALL *from the Closet.*

At. Is all clear? May I venture, madam?

Sir Sol. Ay, ay, quick, quick! make haste before

Sir Solomon returns. A strait-back'd dog, I warrant him. [*Aside.*] But when shall I see you again?

At. Whenever you'll promise me to make a better use of an opportunity.

Sir Sol. Ha! then 'tis possible he mayn't yet have put the finishing stroke to me.

At. Is this the door?

Sir Sol. Ay, ay, away. [*Exit* Atall.] So—now the danger of being murdered is over, I find my courage returns: and if I catch my wife but inclining to be no better than she should be, I'm not sure that blood won't be the consequence.

He goes into the Closet, and WISHWELL *enters.*

Wish. So—my lady has her cue; and if my wise master can give her no better proofs of his penetration than this, she'd be a greater fool than he if she should not do what she has a mind to. Sir, sir, come, you may come out now; Sir Solomon's gone.

Enter Sir SOLOMON *from the Closet.*

Sir Sol. So, now for a soft speech, to set her impudent blood in a ferment, and then let it out with my penknife. [*Aside.*] Come, dear creature, now let's make the kindest use of our opportunity.

Wish. Not for the world. If Sir Solomon should come again, I should be ruined. Pray, begone—I'll send to you to morrow.

Sir Sol. Nay, now you love me not; you would not let me part else thus unsatisfied.

Wish. Now you're unkind. You know I love you, or I should not run such hazards for you.

Sir Sol. Fond whore! [*Aside.*] But I'm afraid you love Sir Solomon, and lay up all your tenderness for him.

Wish. Oh, ridiculous!——How can so sad a wretch give you the least uneasy thought?——I loath the very sight of him.

Sir Sol. Damn'd, infernal strumpet!——I can bear no longer——Lights, lights, within there! [*Seizes her.*

Wish. Ah! [*Shrieks.*] Who's this? Help! murder!

Sir Sol. No, traitress, don't think to 'scape me; for, now I've trapped thee in thy guilt, I could find in my heart to have thee flead alive, thy skin stuffed, and hung up in the middle of Guildhall, as a terrible consequence of cuckoldom to the whole city—Lights there!

Enter Lady SADLIFE *with a Light.*

L. Sad. Oh, Heavens! what's the matter?

[*Sir* Solomon *looks astonished.*

Ha! what do I see? My servant on the floor, and Sir Solomon offering rudeness to her! Oh, I cann't bear it! Oh! [*Falls into a chair.*

Sir Sol. What has the devil been doing here?

L. Sad. This the reward of all my virtue! Oh, revenge, revenge!

Sir Sol. My dear, my good virtuous, injured dear, be patient; for here has been such wicked doings——

L. Sad. Oh, torture! Do you own it too? 'Tis

well my love protects you. But for this wretch, this monster, this sword shall do me justice on her.

[*Runs at* Wishwell *with Sir* Solomon's *sword.*

Sir Sol. Oh, hold, my poor mistaken dear! This horrid jade, the gods can tell, is innocent for me; but she has had, it seems, a strong dog in the closet here; which I suspecting, put myself into his place, and had almost trapped her in the very impudence of her iniquity.

L. Sad. How! I'm glad to find he dares not own 'twas his jealousy of me—— [*Aside.*

Wish. [*Kneeling.*] Dear madam, I hope your ladyship will pardon the liberty I took in your absence, in bringing my lover into your ladyship's chamber; but I did not think you would come home from prayers so soon; and so I was forced to hide him in that closet: but my master suspecting the business, it seems, turned him out unknown to me, and then put himself there, and so had a mind to discover whether there was any harm between us; and so, because he fancied I had been naught with him——

Sir Sol. Ay, my dear? and the jade was so confoundedly fond of me, that I grew out of all patience, and fell upon her like a fury.

L. Sad. Horrid creature!——And does she think to stay a minute in the family after such impudence?

Sir Sol. Hold, my dear——for if this should be the man that is to marry her, you know there may be no harm done yet.

Wish. Yes, it was he indeed, madam.

Sir Sol. [*Aside.*] I must not let the jade be turned away, for fear she should put it in my wife's head that I hid myself to discover her ladyship, and then the devil would not be able to live in the house with her.

Wish. Now, sir, you know what I can tell of you. [*Aside to Sir* Solomon.

Sir Sol. Mum—that's a good girl; there's a guinea for you.

L. Sad. Well, upon your intercession, my dear, I'll pardon her this fault. But, pray, mistress, let me hear of no more such doings. I am so disordered with this fright——Fetch my prayer-book; I'll endeavour to compose myself. [*Exit L.* Sad. *and* Wish.

Sir Sol. Ay, do so; that's my good dear——What two blessed escapes have I had! to find myself no cuckold at last, and, which had been equally terrible, my wife not know I wrongfully suspected her!——Well, at length I am fully convinced of her virtue—and now, if I can but cut off the abominable expence that attends some of her impertinent acquaintance, I shall shew myself a Machiavel.

Re-enter WISHWELL.

Wish. Sir, here's my Lady Dainty come to wait upon my lady.

Sir Sol. I'm sorry for't, with all my heart—Why did you say she was within?

Wish. Sir, she did not ask if she was; but she's never denied to her.

Sir Sol. Gadso! why then, if you please to leave her ladyship to me, I'll begin with her now.

WISHWELL *brings in Lady* DAINTY.

L. Dain. Sir Solomon, your very humble servant.

Sir Sol. Yours, yours, madam.

L. Dain. Where's my lady?

Sir Sol. Where your ladyship very seldom is——at prayers.

Enter Lady SADLIFE.

L. Sad. My dear Lady Dainty!

L. Dain. Dear madam, I am the happiest person alive in finding your ladyship at home.

Sir Sol. So, now for a torrent of impertinence.

L. Sad. Your ladyship does me a great deal of honour.

L. Dain. I am sure I do myself a great deal of pleasure. I have made at least twenty visits to-day. Oh, I'm quite dead! not but my coach is very easy —yet so much perpetual motion, you know——

Sir Sol. Ah, pox of your disorder!—If I had the providing your equipage, odzooks, you should rumble to your visits in a wheel-barrow. [*Aside.*

L. Sad. Was you at my Lady Dutchess's?

L. Dain. A little while.

L. Sad. Had she a great circle?

L. Dain. Extreme——I was not able to bear the breath of so much company.

L. Sad. You did not dine there?

L. Dain. Oh, I cann't touch any body's dinner but my own!——and I have almost killed myself this week, for want of my usual glass of Tokay, after my ortolans and Muscovy duck-eggs.

Sir Sol. 'Sbud, if I had the feeding of you, I'd bring you, in a fortnight, to neck-beef, and a pot of plain bub. [*Aside.*

L. Dain. Then I have been so surfeited with the sight of a hideous entertainment to-day, at my Lady Cormorant's, who knows no other happiness, or way of making one welcome, than eating or drinking: for though she saw I was just fainting at her vast limbs of butcher's meat, yet the civil savage forced me to sit down, and heaped enough upon my plate to victual a fleet for an East-India voyage.

L. Sad. How could you bear it? Ha, ha!——Does your ladyship never go to the play?

L. Dain. Never, but when I bespeak it myself; and then not to mind the actors; for its common to love sights. My great diversion is, in reposed posture, to turn my eyes upon the galleries, and bless myself to hear the happy savages laugh; or when an awkward citizen crowds herself in among us, 'tis an unspeakable pleasure to contemplate her airs and dress: and they never 'scape me; for I am as apprehensive of such a creature's coming near me, as some people are when a cat is in the room.—But the play is begun, I believe; and if your ladyship has an inclination, I'll wait upon you.

L. Sad. I think, madam, we cann't do better; and

here comes Mr. Careless most opportunely to 'squire us.

Sir Sol. Careless! I don't know him; but my wife does, and that's as well.

Enter CARELESS.

Care. Ladies, your servant. Seeing your coach at the door, madam, made me not able to resist this opportunity to—to—you know, madam, there's no time to be lost in love. Sir Solomon, your servant.

Sir Sol. Oh, yours, yours, sir!——A very impudent fellow; and I'm in hopes will marry her. [*Aside.*

L. Dain. The assurance of this creature almost grows diverting: all one can do, cann't make him the least sensible of a discouragement.

L. Sad. Try what compliance will do; perhaps that may fright him.

L. Dain. If it were not too dear a remedy—One would almost do any thing to get rid of his company.

Care. Which you never will, madam, till you marry me, depend upon it. Do that, and I'll trouble you no more.

Sir Sol. This fellow's abominable! He'll certainly have her. [*Aside.*

L. Dain. There's no depending upon your word, or else I might; for the last time I saw you, you told me then, you would trouble me no more.

Care. Ay, that's true, madam; but to keep one's word, you know, looks like a tradesman.

Sir Sol. Impudent rogue! But he'll have her.— [*Aside.*

Care. And is as much below a gentleman as paying one's debts.

Sir Sol. If he is not hanged first. [*Aside.*

Care. Besides, madam, I considered that my absence might endanger your constitution, which is so very tender, that nothing but love can save it; and so I would e'en advise you to throw away your juleps, your cordials, and slops, and take me all at once.

L. Dain. No, sir, bitter potions are not to be taken so suddenly.

Care. Oh, to choose, madam; for if you stand making of faces, and kicking against it, you'll but increase your aversion, and delay the cure. Come, come, you must be advised. [*Pressing her.*

L. Dain. What mean you, sir?

Care. To banish all your ails, and be myself your universal medicine.

Sir Sol. Well said! he'll have her. [*Aside.*

L. Dain. Impudent, robust man; I protest, did not I know his family, I should think his parents had not lived in chairs and coaches, but had used their limbs all their lives! Hu! hu! but I begin to be persuaded health is a great blessing. [*Aside.*

Care. My limbs, madam, were conveyed to me before the use of chairs and coaches, and it might lessen the dignity of my ancestors, not to use them as they did.

L. Dain. Was ever such a rude understanding? to

value himself upon the barbarism of his fore-fathers. ——Indeed I have heard of kings that were bred to the plough, and, I fancy, you might descend from such a race; for you court as if you were behind one —Huh! huh! huh! To treat a woman of quality like an Exchange wench, and express your passion with your arms:—unpolished man!

Care. I was willing, madam, to take from the vulgar the only desirable thing among them, and shew you—how they live so healthy—for they have no other remedy.

L. Dain. A very rough medicine! huh! huh!

Care. To those that never took it, it may seem so—

L. Dain. Abandoned ravisher! Oh! [*Struggling.*

Sir Sol. He has her; he has her. [*Aside.*

L. Dain. Leave the room, and see my face no more.

Care. [*Bows and is going.*]

L. Dain. And, hark ye, sir, no bribe, no mediations to my woman.

Care. [*Bows and sighs.*]

L. Dain. Thou profligate! to hug! to clasp! to embrace and throw your robust arms about me, like a vulgar, and indelicate—Oh, I faint with apprehension of so gross an address!

[*She faints, and* Care. *catches her.*

Care. Oh, my offended fair!

L. Dain. Inhuman! ravisher! Oh!

[Care. *carries her off.*

Sir Sol. He has her! she's undone! he has her!

[*Exeunt Sir* Sol. *and Lady* Sad.

Enter CLARINDA *and* SYLVIA.

Clar. Well, cousin, what do you think of your gentleman now?

Syl. I fancy, madam, that would be as proper a question to ask you: for really I don't see any great reason to alter my opinion of him yet.

Clar. Now I could dash her at once, and shew it her under his own hand that his name's Standfast, and he'll be here in a quarter of an hour. [*Aside.*] I vow I don't think I ought to refuse you any service in my power; therefore if you think it worth your while not to be out of countenance when the colonel comes, I would advise you to withdraw now; for if you dare take his own word for it, he will be here in three minutes, as this may convince you. [*Gives a letter.*

Syl. What's here? a letter from Colonel Standfast? —Really, cousin, I have nothing to say to him.—— Mr. Freeman's the person I'm concerned for, and I expect to see him here in a quarter of an hour.

Clar. Then you don't believe them both the same person?

Syl. Not by their hands or stile, I can assure you, as this may convince you. [*Gives a letter.*

Clar. Ha! the hand is different indeed.——I scarce know what to think,—and yet I'm sure my eyes were not deceived.

Syl. Come, cousin, let's be a little cooler; 'tis not

impossible but we may have both laughed at one another to no purpose—for I am confident they are two persons.

Clar. I cann't tell that, but I'm sure here comes one of them.

Enter ATALL *as* COLONEL STANDFAST.

Syl. Ha!

At. Hey! Bombard, (there they are faith!) bid the chariot set up, and call again about one or two in the morning.——You see, madam, what 'tis to give an impudent fellow the least encouragement: I'm resolved now to make a night on't with you.

Clar. I am afraid, colonel, we shall have much ado to be good company, for we are two women to one man, you see; and if we should both have fancy to have you particular, I doubt you'd make but bungling work on't.

At. I warrant you we will pass our time like gods: two ladies and one man; the prettiest set for Ombre in the universe.—Come, come! Cards, cards, cards! and tea, that I insist upon.

Clar. Well, sir, if my cousin will make one, I won't balk your good-humour. [*Turning* Syl. *to face him.*

At. Is the lady your relation, madam?—I beg the honour to be known to her.

Clar. Oh, sir, that I'm sure she cann't refuse you. ——Cousin, this is Colonel Standfast. [*Laughs aside.*] I hope now she's convinced.

At. Your pardon, madam, if I am a little particular in my desire to be known to any of this lady's relations. [*Salutes.*

Syl. You'll certainly deserve mine, sir, by being always particular to that lady.——

At. Oh, madam!—Tall, lall. [*Turns away and sings.*

Syl. This assurance is beyond example. [*Aside.*

Clar. How do you do, cousin?

Syl. Beyond bearing—but not incurable. [*Aside.*

Clar. [*Aside.*] Now cann't I find in my heart to give him one angry word for his impudence to me this morning? the pleasure of seeing my rival mortified makes me strangely good-natured.

At. [*Turning familiarly to* Clar.] Upon my soul you are provokingly handsome to-day. Ay Gad! why is not it high treason for any beautiful woman to marry?

Clar. What would you have us lead apes?

At. Not one of you, by all that's lovely!——Do you think we could not find you better employment?——Death! what a hand is here?——Gad, I shall grow foolish!

Clar. Stick to your assurance, and you are in no danger.

At. Why then, in obedience to your commands, pr'ythee answer me sincerely one question: How long do you really design to make me dangle thus?

Clar. Why, really I can't just set you a time; but when you are weary of your service, come to me

with a six-pence and modesty, and I'll give you a discharge.

At. Thou insolent, provoking, handsome tyrant!

Clar. Come, let me go——this is not a very civil way of entertaining my cousin, methinks.

At. I beg her pardon indeed. [*Bowing to* Syl.] But lovers, you know, madam, may plead a sort of excuse for being singular, when the favourite fair's in company.—But we were talking of cards, ladies.

Clar. Cousin, what say you?

Syl. I had rather you would excuse me; I am a little unfit for play at this time.

At. What a valuable virtue is assurance! Now am I as intrepid as a lawyer at the bar. [*Aside.*

Clar. Bless me! you are not well!

Syl. I shall be presently.——Pray, sir, give me leave to ask you a question.

At. So, now it's coming! [*Aside.*] Freely, madam.

Syl. Look on me well:—have you never seen my face before?

At. Upon my word, madam, I cann't recollect that I have.

Syl. I am satisfied.

At. But pray, madam, why may you ask?

Syl. I am too much disordered now to tell you—— But if I'm not deceived, I'm miserable. [*Weeps.*

At. This is strange.——How her concern transports me!

Clar. Her fears have touched me, and half persuade me to revenge them.——Come, cousin, be easy: I

see you are convinced he is the same, and now I'll prove myself a friend.

Syl. I know not what to think——my senses are confounded: their features are indeed the same; and yet there's something in their air, their dress, and manner, strangely different: but be it as it will, all right to him in presence I disclaim, and yield to you for ever.

" *At.* Oh, charming, joyful grief! [*Aside.*"

Clar. No, cousin, believe it, both our senses cannot be deceived; he's individually the same; and since he dares be base to you, he's miserable indeed, if flattered with a distant hope of me: I know his person and his falsehood both too well; and you shall see I will, as becomes your friend, resent it.

At. What means this strangeness, madam?

Clar. I'll tell you, sir; and to use few words, know then, this lady and myself have borne your faithless insolence and artifice too long: but that you may not think to impose on me, at least, I desire you would leave the house, and from this moment never see me more.

At. Madam! What! what is all this?

Riddle me riddle me re,
For the devil take me
For ever from thee,
If I can divine what this riddle can be.

Syl. Not moved! I'm more amazed.

At. Pray, madam, in the name of common sense, let me know in two words what the real meaning of

your last terrible speech was; and if I don't make you a plain, honest, reasonable answer to it, be pleased the next minute to blot my name out of your table-book, never more to be inrolled in the senseless catalogue of those vain coxcombs, that impudently hope to come into your favour.

Clar. This insolence grows tedious: what end can you propose by this assurance?

At. Hey-day!

Syl. Hold, cousin——one moment's patience: I'll send this minute again to Mr. Freeman, and if he does not immediately appear, the dispute will need no farther argument.

At. Mr. Freeman! Who the devil's he? What have I to do with him?

Syl. I'll soon inform you, sir.

[*Going, meets* Wishwell *entering.*

Wish. Madam, here's a footman mightily out of breath, says he belongs to Mr. Freeman, and desires very earnestly to speak with you.

Syl. Mr. Freeman! Pray bid him come in.—— What can this mean?

At. You'll see presently. [*Aside.*

Re-enter WISHWELL *with* FINDER.

Clar. Ha!

Syl. Come hither, friend: do you belong to Mr. Freeman?

Fin. Yes, madam, and my poor master gives his humble service to your ladyship, and begs your par-

don for not waiting on you according to his promise; which he would have done, but for an unfortuate accident.

Syl. What's the matter?

Fin. As he was coming out of his lodgings to pay his duty to you, madam, a parcel of fellows set upon him, and said they had a warrant against him; and so, because the rascals began to be saucy with him, and my master knowing that he did not owe a shilling in the world, he drew to defend himself, and in the scuffle the bloody villians run one of their swords quite through his arm; but the best of the jest was, madam, that as soon as they got him into a house, and sent for a surgeon, he proved to be the wrong person; for their warrant, it seems, was against a poor scoundrel, that happens, they say, to be very like him, one Colonel Standfast.

At. Say you so, Mr. Dog——if your master had been here I would have given him as much.

[*Gives him a box on the ear.*

Fin. Oh, Lord! pray, madam, save me—I did not speak a word to the gentleman—Oh, the devil! this must be the devil in the likeness of my master.

Syl. Is this gentleman so very like him, say you?

Fin. Like, madam! ay, as one box of the ear is like to another; only I think, madam, my master's nose is a little, little higher.

At. Now, ladies, I presume the riddle's solved——Hark you, where is your master, rascal?

Fin. Master, rascal! Sir, my master's name's Free-

man, and I'm a free-born Englishman; and I must tell you, sir, that I don't use to take such arbitrary socks of the face from any man that does not pay me wages; and so my master will tell you too when he comes, sir.

Syl. Will he be here then?

Fin. This minute, madam, he only stays to have his wound dressed.

At. I'm resolved I'll stay that minute out, if he does not come till midnight.

Fin. A pox of his mettle—when his hand's in he makes no difference between jest and earnest, I find—If he does not pay me well for this, 'egad he shall tell the next for himself. [*Aside.*] Has your ladyship any commands to my master, madam?

Syl. Yes; pray give him my humble service, say I'm sorry for his misfortune; and if he thinks 'twill do his wound no harm, I beg, by all means, he may be brought hither immediately.

Fin. 'Shah! his wound, madam, I know he does not value it of a rush; for he'll have the devil and all of actions against the rogues for false imprisonment, and smart-money——Ladies, I kiss your hands——Sir, I——nothing at all—— [*Exit.*

At. [*Aside.*] The dog has done it rarely; for a lie upon the stretch I don't know a better rascal in Europe.

Enter an Officer.

Off. Ay! now I'm sure I'm right——Is not your name Colonel Standfast, sir?

At. Yes, sir; what then?

Off. Then you are my prisoner, sir———

At. Your prisoner! who the devil are you? a bailiff? I don't owe a shilling.

Off. I don't care if you don't, sir; I have a warrant against you for high treason, and I must have you away this minute.

At. Look you, sir, depend upon't, this is but some impertinent malicious prosecution: you may venture to stay a quarter of an hour, I'm sure; I have some business here till then, that concerns me nearer than my life.

Clar. Have but so much patience, and I'll satisfy you for your civility,

Off. I could not stay a quarter of an hour, madam, if you'd give me five hundred pounds.

Syl. Cann't you take bail, sir?

Off. Bail! no, no.

Clar. Whither must he be carried?

Off. To my house, till he's examined before the council.

Clar. Where is your house?

Off. Just by the secretary's office; every body knows Mr. Lockum the messenger—Come, sir.

At. I cann't stir yet, indeed, sir.

[*Lays his hand on his sword.*

Off. Nay, look you, if you are for that play—Come in, gentlemen, away with him.

Enter Musqueteers and force him off.

Syl. This is the strangest accident: I am extremely

sorry for the colonel's misfortune, but I am heartily glad he is not Mr. Freeman.

Clar. I'm afraid you'll find him so——I shall never change my opinion of him till I see them face to face.

Syl. Well, cousin, let them be two or one, I'm resolved to stick to Mr. Freeman; for, to tell you the truth, this last spark has too much of the confident rake in him to please me; but there is a modest sincerity in t'other's conversation that's irresistible.

Clar. For my part I'm almost tired with his impertinence either way, and could find in my heart to trouble myself no more about him; and yet methinks it provokes me to have a fellow outface my senses.

Syl. Nay, they are strangely alike, I own; but yet, if you observe nicely, Mr. Freeman's features are more pale and pensive than the colonel's.

Clar. When Mr. Freeman comes, I'll be closer in my observation of him—in the mean time let me consider what I really propose by all this rout I make about him: suppose (which I can never believe) they should prove two several men at last, I don't find that I'm fool enough to think of marrying either of them; nor (whatever airs I give myself) am I yet mad enough to do worse with them——Well, since I don't design to come to a close engagement myself, then why should I not generously stand out of the way, and make room for one that would? No, I cann't do that neither—I want, methinks, to convict him first of being one and the same person, and then to have him convince my cousin that he likes me better than

her—Ay, that would do! and to confess my infirmity, I still find (though I don't care for this fellow) while she has assurance to nourish the least hope of getting him from me, I shall never be heartily easy 'till she's heartily mortified. [*Aside.*

Syl. You seem very much concerned for the Colonel's misfortune, cousin.

Clar. His misfortunes seldom hold him long, as you may see; for here he comes.

Enter ATALL, *as Mr.* FREEMAN.

Syl. Bless me!

At. I am sorry, madam, I could not be more punctual to your obliging commands; but the accident that prevented my coming sooner, will, I hope, now give me a pretence to a better welcome than my last; for now, madam, [*To* Clar.] your mistake's set right, I presume; and, I hope, you won't expect Mr. Freeman to answer for all the miscarriages of Colonel Standfast.

Clar. Not in the least, sir: the colonel's able to answer for himself, I find! ha, ha!

At. Was not my servant with you, madam? [*To* Syl.

Syl. Yes, yes, sir, he has told us all. [*Aside.*] And I am sorry you have paid so dear for a proof of your innocence. Come, come, I'd advise you to set your heart at rest; for what I design, you'll find, I shall come to a speedy resolution in.

At. Oh, generous resolution!

Clar. Well, madam, since you are so tenacious of your conquest, I hope you'll give me the same liberty: and not expect, the next time you fall a crying at the colonel's gallantry to me, that my good-nature should give you up my pretensions to him. And for you, sir, I shall only tell you, this last plot was not so closely laid, but that a woman of a very slender capacity, you'll find, has wit enough to discover it. [*Exit* Clar.

At. So! she's gone to the messenger's I suppose—but, poor soul, her intelligence there will be extremely small. [*Aside.*] Well, madam, I hope at last your scruples are over.

Syl. You cann't blame me, sir, if, now we are alone, I own myself a little more surprised at her positiveness, than my woman's pride would let me confess before her face; and yet methinks there's a native honesty in your look, that tells me I am not mistaken, and may trust you with my heart.

At. Oh, for pity still preserve that tender thought, and save me from despair.

Enter CLERIMONT.

Cler. Ha! Freeman again! Is it possible?

At. How now, Clerimont, what are you surprised at?

Cler. Why to see thee almost in two places at one time; 'tis but this minute, I met the very image of thee, with the mob about a coach, in the hands of a messenger, whom I had the curiosity to stop and call to; and

had no other proof of his not being thee, but that the spark would not know me!

Syl. Strange! I almost think I'm really not deceived.

Cler. 'Twas certainly Clarinda I saw go out in a chair just now—it must be she—the circumstances are too strong for a mistake. [*Aside.*

Syl. Well, sir, to ease you of your fears, now I dare own to you, that mine are over. [*To* Atall.

Cler. What a coxcomb have I made myself, to serve my rival even with my own mistress? But 'tis at least some ease to know him: all I have to hope is, that he does not know the ass he has made of me—that might indeed be fatal to him. [*Aside.*

Enter SYLVIA'S *Maid.*

Maid. Oh, madam, I'm glad I've found you: your father and I have been hunting you all the town over.

Syl. My father in town!

Maid. He waits below in the coach for you; he must needs have you come away this minute; and talks of having you married this very night to the fine gentleman he spoke to you of.

Syl. What do I hear?

At. Never soft compassion touched your soul, give me a word of comfort in this last distress, to save me from the horrors that surround me.

Syl. You see we are observed——but yet depend upon my faith as on my life.——In the mean time, I'll use my utmost power to avoid my father's hasty will: in two hours you shall know my fortune and

my family—Now, don't follow me, as you'd preserve my friendship. Come—— [*Exit with Maid.*

At. Death! how this news alarms me! I never felt the pains of love before.

Cler. Now then to ease, or to revenge my fears—This sudden change of your countenance, Mr. Atall, looks as if you had a mind to banter your friend into a belief of your being really in love with the lady that just now left you.

At. Faith, Clerimont, I have too much concern upon me at this time, to be capable of a banter.

Cler. Ha! he seems really touched, and I begin now only to fear Clarinda's conduct.——Well, sir, if it be so, I'm glad to see a convert of you; and now, in return to the little services I have done you, in helping you to carry on your affair with both these ladies at one time, give me leave to ask a favour of you——Be still sincere, and we may still be friends.

At. You surprise me—but use me as you find me.

Cler. Have you no acquaintance with a certain lady whom you have lately heard me own I was unfortunately in love with?

At. Not that I know of, I'm sure not as the lady you are in love with: but, pray, why do you ask?

Cler. Come, I'll be sincere with you too: because I have strong circumstances that convince me 'tis one of those two you have been so busy about.

At. Not she you saw with me, I hope?

Cler. No; I mean the other—But to clear the doubt at once, is her name Clarinda?

At. I own it is: but had I the least been warned of your pretences——

Cler. Sir, I dare believe you; and though you may have prevailed even against her honour, your ignorance of my passion for her makes you stand at least excused to me.

At. No; by all the solemn protestations tongue can utter, her honour is untainted yet for me; nay, even unattempted: "nor had I ever an opportunity, that "could encourage the most distant thought against "it."

Cler. You own she has received your gallantries at least.

At. Faith, not to be vain, she has indeed taken some pains to pique her cousin about me; and if her beautiful cousin had not fallen in my way at the same time, I must own, 'tis very possible I might have endeavoured to push my fortune with her; but since I now know your heart, put my friendship to a trial.

Cler. Only this—If I should be reduced to ask it of you, promise to confess your imposture, and your passion to her cousin, before her face.

At. There's my hand,—I'll do't, to right my friend and mistress. But, dear Clerimont, you'll pardon me if I leave you here; for my poor incognita's affairs at this time are in a very critical condition.

Cler. No ceremony—I release you.

At. Adieu. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter CLERIMONT *and* CARELESS.

Clerimont.

AND so you took the opportunity of her fainting to carry her off! Pray, how long did her fit last?

Care. Why, faith, I so humoured her affectation, that 'tis hardly over yet; for I told her, her life was in danger, and swore, if she would not let me send for a parson to marry her before she died, I'd that minute send for a shroud, and be buried alive with her in the same coffin: but at the apprehension of so terrible a thought, she pretended to be frightened into her right senses again; and forbid me her sight for ever.——So that, in short, my impudence is almost exhausted, her affectation is as unsurmountable as another's real virtue, and I must e'en catch her that way, or die without her at last.

Cler. How do you mean?

Care. Why, if I find I cann't impose upon her by humility, which I'll try, I'll even turn rival to myself in a very fantastical figure, that I'm sure she won't be able to resist. You must know, she has of late been flattered that the Muscovite Prince Alexander is dying for her, though he never spoke to her in his life.

Cler. I understand you: so you'd first venture to

pique her against you, and then let her marry you in another person, to be revenged of you.

Care. One of the two ways I am pretty sure to succeed.

Cler. Extravagant enough! Prythee, is Sir Solomon in the next room?

Care. What, you want his assistance? Clarinda's in her airs again!

Cler. Faith, Careless, I am almost ashamed to tell you, but I must needs speak with him.

Care. Come along then. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Lady DAINTY, *Lady* SADLIFE, *and* CARELESS.

L. Dain. This rude, boisterous man, has given me a thousand disorders; the colic, the spleen, the palpitation of the heart, and convulsions all over—Huh! huh!—I must send for the doctor.

L. Sad. Come, come, madam, e'en pardon him, and let him be your physician—do but observe his penitence, so humble he dares not speak to you.

Care. [*Folds his arms and sighs.*] Oh!

L. Sad. How can you hear him sigh so?

L. Dain. Nay, let him groan—for nothing but his pangs can ease me.

Care. [*Kneels and presents her his drawn sword; opening his breast.*] Be then at once most barbarously just, and take your vengeance here.

L. Dain. No, I give thee life to make thee miserable; live, that my resenting eyes may kill thee every hour.

Clare. Nay, then there's no relief——but this——

[*Offering at his sword,* Lady Sadlife *holds him.*

L. Sad. Ah! for mercy's sake——Barbarous creature, how can you see him thus?

L. Dain. Why, I did not bid him kill himself: but do you really think he would have done it?

L. Sad. Certainly, if I had not prevented it.

L. Dain. Strange passion! But 'tis its nature to be violent, when one makes it despair.

L. Sad. Won't you speak to him?

L. Dain. No, but if your——is enough concerned to be his friend, you may tell him—not that it really is so—but you may say—you believe I pity him.

L. Sad. Sure love was never more ridiculous on both sides.

Enter WISHWELL.

Wish. Madam, here's a page from Prince Alexander desires to give a letter into your ladyship's own hands.

L. Dain. Prince Alexander! what means my heart? I come to him.

L. Sad. By no means, madam, pray let him come in.

Care. Ha! Prince Alexander! nay, then I have found out the secret of this coldness, madam!

Enter Page.

Page. Madam, his Royal Highness Prince Alexander, my master, has commanded me, on pain of death, thus [*Kneeling.*] to deliver this, the burning secret of his heart.

L. Dain. Where is the Prince?

Page. Reposed in private on a mourning pallat, 'till your commands vouchsafe to raise him.

L. Sad. By all means, receive him here immediately. I have the honour to be a little known to his highness.

L. Dain. The favour, madam, is too great to be resisted: pray tell his highness then, the honour of the visit he designs me, makes me thankful and impatient! huh! huh! [*Exit Page.*

Care. Are my sufferings, madam, so soon forgot then! Was I but flattered with the hope of pity?

L. Dain. The happy have whole days, and those they choose. [*Resenting.*] The unhappy have but hours, and those they lose. [*Exit repeating.*

L. Sad. Don't you lose a minute then.

Care. I'll warrant you—ten thousand thanks, dear madam, I'll be transformed in a second———

[*Exeunt severally.*

Enter CLARINDA *in a Man's habit.*

Clar. So! I'm in for't now! how I shall come off I cann't tell: 'twas but a bare saving game I made with Clermont; his resentment had brought my pride to its last legs, dissembling; and if the poor man had not loved me too well, I had made but a dismal humble figure—I have used him ill, that's certain, and he may e'en thank himself for't—he would be sincere—Well, (begging my sex's pardon) we do make the silliest tyrants——we had better be reason-

able; for (to do them right) we don't run half the hazard in obeying the good sense of a lover; at least, I'm reduced now to make the experiment—— Here they come.

Enter Sir SOLOMON *and* CLERIMONT.

Sir Sol. What have we here! another captain? If I were sure he were a coward now, I'd kick him before he speaks——Is your business with me, sir?

Clar. If your name be Sir Solomon Sadlife.

Sir Sol. Yes, sir, it is; and I'll maintain it as ancient as any, and related to most of the families in England.

Clar. My business will convince you, sir, that I think well of it.

Sir Sol. And what is your business, sir?

Clar. Why, sir——You have a pretty kinswoman, called Clarinda.

Cler. Ha!

Sir Sol. And what then, sir?——Such a rogue as t'other. [*Aside.*

Clar. Now, sir, I have seen her, and am in love with her.

Cler. Say you so, sir?—I may chance to cure you of it. [*Aside.*

Clar. And to back my pretensions, sir, I have a good fifteen hundred pounds a year estate, and am, as you see, a pretty fellow into the bargain.

Sir Sol. She that marries you, sir, will have a choice bargain indeed.

Clar. In short, sir, I'll give you a thousand guineas to make up the match.

Sir Sol. Hum—[*Aside.*]—But, sir, my niece is provided for.

Cler. That's well! [*Aside.*

Sir Sol. But if she were not, sir, I must tell you, she is not to be caught with a smock-face and a feather, sir——And——and——let me see you an hour hence. [*Aside.*

Clar. Well said, uncle! [*Aside.*]——But, sir, I'm in love with her, and positively will have her.

Sir Sol. Whether she likes you or no, sir?

Clar. Like me! ha, ha! I'd fain see a woman that dislikes a pretty fellow, with fifteen hundred pounds a year, a white wig, and black eye-brows.

Cler. Hark, you, young gentleman, there must go more than all this to the gaining of that lady.

[*Takes* Clarinda *aside.*

Sir Sol. [*Aside.*] A thousand guineas—that's five hundred more than I proposed to get of Mr. Clerimont——But my honour is engaged——Ay, but then here's a thousand pounds to release it—Now, shall I take the money?—It must be so—Coin will carry it.

Clar. Oh, sir, if that be all, I'll soon remove your doubts and pretensions! Come, sir, I'll try your courage.

Cler. I'm afraid you won't, young gentleman.

Clar. As young as I am, sir, you shall find I scorn to turn my back to any man

[*Exeunt* Clarinda *and* Clerimont.

Sir Sol. Ha! they are gone to fight——with all my heart—a fair chance, at least, for a better bargain: for if the young spark should let the air into my friend Clerimont's midriff now, it may possibly cool his love too, and then there's my honour safe, and a thousand guineas snug. [*Exit.*

" *Enter Lady* DAINTY, *Lady* SADLIFE, *and* CARELESS *as Prince* ALEXANDER.

" *L. Dain.* Your highness, sir, has done me ho-
" nour in this visit.

" *Care.* Madam [*Salutes her.*

" *L. Dain.* A captivating person!

" *Care.* May the days be taken from my life, and
" added to yours, most incomparable beauty, whiter
" than the snow that lies throughout the year un-
" melted on our Russian mountains!

" *L. Dain.* How manly his expressions are!—We
" are extremely obliged to the Czar, for not taking
" your highness home with him.

" *Care.* He left me, madam, to learn to be a ship
" carpenter.

" *L. Sad.* A very polite accomplishment!

" *L. Dain.* And in a prince entirely new.

" *Care.* All his nobles, madam, are masters of some
" useful science, and most of our arms are quartered
" with mechanical instruments, as hatchets, hammers,
" pick-axes, and hand-saws.

" *L. Dain.* I admire the manly manners of your
" court.

"*L. Sad.* Oh, so infinitely beyond the soft idleness "of ours!

"*Care.* 'Tis the fashion, ladies, for the eastern "princes to profess some trade or other. The last "Grand Signior was a locksmith.

"*L. Dain.* How new his conversation is!

"*Care.* Too rude, I fear, madam, for so tender a "composition as your divine ladyship's.

"*L. Dain.* Courtly to a softness too!

"*Care.* Were it possible, madam, that so much "delicacy could endure the martial roughness of our "manners and our country, I cannot boast; but if a "province at your feet could make you mine, that "province and its master should be yours.

"*L. Dain.* Ay, here's grandeur with address!—— "An odious native lover, now, would have com- "plained of the taxes, perhaps, and have haggled with "one for a scanty jointure out of his horrid lead "mines, in some uninhabitable mountains, about "an hundred and four-score miles from unheard-of "London.

"*Care.* I am informed, madam, there is a certain "poor, distracted English fellow, that refused to quit "his saucy pretensions to your all-conquering beauty, "though he had heard I had myself resolved to adore "you. Careless, I think they call him.

"*L. Dain.* Your highness wrongs your merit, to "give yourself the least concern for one so much be- "low your fear.

"*Care.* When I first heard of him, I on the instant

" ordered one of my retinue to strike off his head with " a scimitar; but they told me the free laws of Eng- " land allowed of no such power: so that, though I " am a prince of the blood, madam, I am obliged " only to murder him privately.

" *L. Dain.* 'Tis indeed a reproach to the ill-breed- " ing of our constitution, not to admit your power " with your person. But if the pain of my entire " neglect can end him, pray, be easy.

" *Care.* Madam, I'm not revengeful; make him " but miserable, I'm satisfied.

" *L. Dain.* You may depend upon it.

" *Care.* I'm in strange favour with her. [*Aside.*— " Please you, ladies, to make your fragrant fingers " familiar with this box.

" *L. Dain.* Sweet or plain, sir?

" *Care.* Right Mosco, madam, made of the sculls " of conquered enemies.

" *L. Sad.* Gunpowder, as I live! [*Exeunt.*"

SCENE II.

Changes to a Field. Enter CLARINDA *and* CLERMONT.

Cler. Come, sir, we are far enough.

Clar. I only wish the lady were by, sir, that the conqueror might carry her off the spot——I warrant she'd be mine.

Cler. That, my talking hero, we shall soon determine.

Clar. Not that I think her handsome, or care a rush for her.

Cler. You are very mettled, sir, to fight for a woman you don't value.

Clar. Sir, I value the reputation of a gentleman; and I don't think any young fellow ought to pretend to it, till he has talked himself into a lampoon, lost his two or three thousand pounds, at play, kept his miss, and killed his man.

Cler. Very gallant, indeed, sir! but if you please to handle your sword, you'll soon go through your course.

Clar. Come on, sir——I believe I shall give your mistress a truer account of your heart than you have done. I have had her heart long enough, and now will have yours.

Cler. Ha! does she love you, then?

[*Endeavouring to draw.*

Clar. I leave you to judge that, sir. But I have lain with her a thousand times; in short, so long, till I'm tired of it.

Cler. Villain, thou liest! Draw, or I'll use you as you deserve, and stab you.

Clar. Take this with you first, Clarinda will never marry him that murders me.

Cler. She may the man that vindicates her honour ——therefore be quick, or I'll keep my word——I find your sword is not for doing things in haste.

Clar. It sticks to the scabbard so; I believe I did

not wipe off the blood of the last man I fought with.

Cler. Come, sir, this trifling sha'n't serve your turn —Here, give me yours, and take mine.

Clar. With all my heart, sir.——Now have at you.

[*Cler. draws, and finds only a hilt in his hand.*

Cler. Death! you villain, do you serve me so!

Clar. In love and war, sir, all advantages are fair; so we conquer, no matter whether by force or stratagem.——Come, quick, sir—your life or mistress.

Cler. Neither. Death! you shall have both or none! Here drive your sword; for only through this heart you reach Clarinda.

Clar. Death, sir, can you be mad enough to die for a woman that hates you?

Cler. If that were true, 'twere greater madness, then, to live.

Clar. Why, to my knowledge, sir, she has used you basely, falsly, ill, and for no reason.

Cler. No matter; no usage can be worse than the contempt of poorly, tamely parting with her. She may abuse her heart by happy infidelities; but 'tis the pride of mine to be even miserably constant.

Clar. Generous passion! You almost tempt me to resign her to you.

Cler. You cannot if you would. I would indeed have won her fairly from you with my sword; but scorn to take her as your gift. Be quick and end your insolence.

Clar. Yes, thus——Most generous Clerimont, you

now, indeed, have fairly vanquished me! [*Runs to him.*] My woman's follies and my shame be buried ever here.

Cler. Ha, Clarinda! Is it possible? My wonder rises with my joy!—How came you in this habit?

Clar. Now you indeed recall my blushes; but I had no other veil to hide them, while I confess'd the injuries I had done your heart, in fooling with a man I never meant on any terms to engage with. Beside, I knew, from our late parting, your fear of losing me would reduce you to comply with Sir Solomon's demands, for his interest in your favour. Therefore, as you saw, I was resolved to ruin his market, by seeming to raise it; for he secretly took the offer I made him.

Cler. 'Twas generously and timely offered; for it really prevented my signing articles to him. But if you would heartily convince me that I shall never more have need of his interest, e'en let us steal to the next priest, and honestly put it out of his power ever to part us.

Clar. Why, truly, considering the trusts I have made you, 'twould be ridiculous now, I think, to deny you any thing: and if you should grow weary of me after such usage, I can't blame you.

Cler. *Banish that fear; my flame can never waste,*
For love sincere refines upon the taste. [Exeunt.

Enter Sir SOLOMON, *with old Mr.* WILFUL; *Lady* SADLIFE, *and* SYLVIA *weeping.*

Sir Sol. Troth, my old friend, this is a bad business indeed; you have bound yourself in a thousand pounds bond, you say, to marry your daughter to a fine gentleman, and she in the mean time, it seems, is fallen in love with a stranger.

Wilf. Look you, Sir Solomon, it does not trouble me o' this; for I'll make her do as I please, or I'll starve her.

L. Sad. But, sir, your daughter tells me that the gentleman she loves is in every degree in as good circumstances as the person you design her for; and if he does not prove himself so before to-morrow morning, she will cheerfully submit to whatever you'll impose on her.

Wilf. All sham! all sham! only to gain time. I expect my friend and his son here immediately, to demand performance of articles; and if her ladyship's nice stomach does not immediately comply with them, as I told you before, I'll starve her.

L. Sad. But, consider, sir, what a perpetual discord must a forced marriage probably produce.

Wilf. Discord! pshaw! waw! One man makes as good a husband as another. A month's marriage will set all to rights, I warrant you. You know the old saying, Sir Solomon, lying together makes pigs love.

L. Sad. [*To* Syl.] What shall we do for you? There's

no altering him. Did not your lover promise to come to your assistance?

Syl. I expect him every minute; but cann't foresee from him the least hope of my redemption.——This is he.

Enter ATALL *undisguised.*

At. My Sylvia, dry those tender eyes; for while there's life there's hope.

L. Sad. Ha! is't he? but I must smother my confusion. [*Aside.*

Wilf. How now, sir! pray, who gave you commission to be so familiar with my daughter?

At. Your pardon, sir; but when you know me right, you'll neither think my freedom or my pretensions familiar or dishonourable.

Wilf. Why, sir, what pretensions have you to her?

At. Sir, I saved her life at the hazard of my own: that gave me a pretence to know her; knowing her made me love, and gratitude made her receive it.

Wilf. Ay, sir! And some very good reasons, best known to myself, make me refuse it. Now, what will you do?

At. I cann't tell yet, sir; but if you'll do me the favour to let me know those reasons——

Wilf. Sir, I don't think myself obliged to do either;—but I'll tell you what I'll do for you: since you say you love my daughter, and she loves you, I'll put you in the nearest way to get her.

At. Don't flatter me, I beg you, sir.

Wilf. Not I, upon my soul, sir; for, look you, 'tis only this——get my consent, and you shall have her.

At. I beg your pardon, sir, for endeavouring to talk reason to you. But, to return your raillery, give me leave to tell you, when any man marries her but myself, he must extremely ask my consent.

Wilf. Before George, thou art a very pretty impudent fellow; and I'm sorry I cann't punish her disobedience, by throwing her away upon thee.

At. You'll have a great deal of plague about this business, sir; for I shall be mighty difficult to give up my pretensions to her.

Wilf. Ha! 'tis a thousand pities I cann't comply with thee. Thou wilt certainly be a thriving fellow; for thou dost really set the best face upon a bad cause, that ever I saw since I was born.

At. Come, sir, once more, raillery apart; suppose I prove myself of equal birth and fortune to deserve her.

Wilf. Sir, if you were eldest son to the Cham of Tartary, and had the dominions of the Great Mogul entailed upon you and your heirs for ever, it would signify no more than the bite of my thumb. The girl's disposed of; I have matched her already, upon a thousand pounds forfeit; and faith she shall fairly run for't, though she's yerk'd and flead from the crest to the crupper.

At. Confusion!

Syl. What will become of me?

Wilf. And if you don't think me in earnest now, here comes one that will convince you of my sincerity.

At. My father! Nay, then my ruin is inevitable.

Enter Sir HARRY ATALL.

Sir Har. [*To* At.] Oh, sweet sir! have I found you at last? Your very humble servant. What's the reason pray, that you have had the assurance to be almost a fortnight in town, and never come near me, especially when I sent you word I had business of such consequence with you.

At. I understood your business was to marry me, sir, a woman I never saw: and to confess the truth, I durst not come near you, because I was at the same time in love with one you never saw.

Sir Har. Was you so, sir? Why, then, sir, I'll find a speedy cure for your passion——Brother Wilful—Hey, fiddles there!

At. Sir, you may treat me with what severity you please; but my engagements to that lady are too powerful and fixed to let the utmost misery dissolve them.

Sir Har. What does the fool mean?

At. That I can sooner die than part with her.

Wilf. Hey!——Why, is this your son, Sir Harry?

Sir Har. Hey-day!—Why, did not you know that before?

At. Oh, earth, and all you stars! is this the lady you designed me, sir?

Syl. Oh, fortune! is it possible?

Sir Har. And is this the lady, sir, you have been making such a bustle about?

At. Not life, health, or happiness are half so dear to me.

Sir Sol. [*Joining* At. *and* Sylvia's *hands.*] Loll, loll, leroll!

At. Oh, transporting joy! [*Embracing* Sylvia.

Sir Har. and Wilf. Loll! loll! [*Joining in the tune, and dancing about them.*]

Sir Sol. Hey! within there! [*Calls the fiddles.*] By jingo, we'll make a night on't!

Enter CLARINDA *and* CLERIMONT.

Clar. Save you, save you, good people—I'm glad, uncle, to hear you call so cheerfully for the fiddles; it looks as if you had a husband ready for me.

Sir Sol. Why, that I may have by to-morrow night, madam; but, in the mean time, if you please, you may wish your friends joy.

Clar. Dear Sylvia!

Syl. Clarinda!

At. Oh, Clerimont, such a deliverance!

Cler. Give you joy, joy, sir.

Clar. I congratulate your happiness, and am pleased our little jealousies are over; Mr. Clerimont has told me all, and cured me of curiosity for ever.

Syl. What, married?

Clar. You'll see presently. But, Sir Solomon, what do you mean by to-morrow? Why, do you

fancy I have any more patience than the rest of my neighbours?

Sir Sol. Why, truly, madam, I don't suppose you have; but I believe to-morrow will be as soon as their business can be done; by which time I expect a jolly fox-hunter from Yorkshire: and if you are resolved not to have patience till next day, why, the same parson may toss you up all four in a dish together.

Clar. A filthy fox-hunter!

Sir Sol. Odzooks, a mettled fellow, that will ride you from day-break to sun-set! None of your flimsy London rascals, that must have a chair to carry them to their coach, and a coach to carry them to a trapes, and a constable to carry both to the round-house.

Clar. Ay, but this fox-hunter, Sir Solomon, will come home dirty and tired as one of his hounds; he'll be always asleep before he's a-bed, and on horseback before he's awake; he must rise early to follow his sport, and I sit up late at cards for want of better diversion. Put this together, my wise uncle.

Sir Sol. Are you so high fed, madam, that a country gentleman of fifteen hundred pounds a-year won't go down with you?

Clar. Not so, sir; but you really kept me so sharp, that I was e'en forced to provide for myself; and here stands the fox-hunter for my money.

[*Claps* Cler. *on the shoulder.*

Sir Sol. How!

Cler. Even so, Sir Solomon—Hark in you ear, sir

—You really held your consent at so high a price, that, to give you a proof of my good husbandry, I was resolved to save charges, and e'en marry her without it.

Sir Sol. Hell and——

Clar. And hark you in t'other ear, sir——Because I would not have you expose your reverend age by a mistake, know, sir, I was the young spark with a smooth face and a feather, that offered you a thousand guineas for your consent, which you would have been glad to have taken.

Sir Sol. The devil!——If ever I traffic in women's flesh again, may all the bank stocks fall when I have bought them, and rise when I have sold them.—— Hey-day! what have we here? more cheats?

Cler. Not unlikely, sir; for I fancy they are married.

Enter Lady DAINTY *and* CARELESS.

L. Sad. That they are, I can assure you——I give your highness joy, madam.

L. Dain. Lard, that people of any rank should use such vulgar salutations! though, methinks, highness has something of grandeur in the sound. But I was in hopes, good people, that confident fellow, Careless, had been among you.

Care. What say you, madam, (to divert the good company) shall we send for him by way of mortification?

L. Dain. By all means; for your sake, methinks, I ought to give him full despair.

Care. Why, then, to let you see, that 'tis a much easier thing to cure a fine lady of her sickly taste, than a lover of his impudence—there's Careless for you, without the least tincture of despair about him.

[*Discovers himself.*

All. Ha, Careless!

L. Dain. Abused! undone!

All. Ha, ha!

Cler. Nay now, madam, we wish you a superior joy; for you have married a man instead of a monster.

Care. Come, come, madam; since you find you were in the power of such a cheat, you may be glad it was no greater: you might have fallen into a rascal's hands; but you know I am a gentleman, my fortune no small one, and, if your temper will give me leave, will deserve you.

L. Sad. Come, e'en make the best of your fortune; for, take my word, if the cheat had not been a very agreeable one, I would never have had a hand in't. —You must pardon me, if I cann't help laughing.

L. Dain. Well, since it must be so, I pardon all; only one thing let me beg of you, sir; that is, your promise to wear this habit one *month* for my satisfaction.

Care. Oh, madam, that's a trifle! I'll lie in the sun a whole summer for an olive complexion, to oblige you.

L. Dain. Well, Mr. Careless, I begin now to think better of my fortune, and look back with apprehension of the escape I have had; you have already cured my folly, and were but my health recoverable, I should think myself completely happy.

Care. For that, madam, we'll venture to save you doctor's fees;

And trust to nature: time will soon discover,
Your best physician is a favour'd lover.

[Exeunt omnes.

EPILOGUE.

WELL, sirs, I know not how the play may pass,
But, in my humble sense—our bard's an ass;
For had he ever known the least of nature,
H' had found his double spark a dismal creature:
To please two ladies he two forms puts on,
As if the thing in shadows could be done;
The women really two, and he, poor soul! but one.
Had he revers'd the hint, h' had done the feat,
Had made th' impostor credibly complete;
A single mistress might have stood the cheat.
She might to several lovers have been kind,
Nor strain'd your faith, to think both pleas'd and blind.
Plain sense had known, the fair can love receive,
With half the pains your warmest vows can give.

But, hold!—I'm thinking I mistake the matter—
On second thoughts—The hint's but honest satire,
And only meant t' expose their modish sense,
Who think the fire of love's but impudence.
Our spark was really modest; when he found
Two female claims at once, he one disown'd;
Wisely presuming, though in ever such haste,
One would be found enough for him at last.

So that, to sum the whole, I think the play
Deserves the usual favours on his day;
If not, he swears he'll write the next to music,
In doggrel rhimes would make or him or you sick.
His groveling sense Italian airs shall crown,
And then he's sure ev'n nonsense will go down.
But if you'd have the world suppose the stage
Not quite forsaken in this airy age,
Let your glad votes our needless fears confound,
And speak in claps as loud for sense as sound.

THE END.

L. Wilde print.

Mr. POPE as VARANES.

Look Were! Sta. is't possible?

London. Printed for J. Bell, British Library, Strand. 1 April 1775.

THEODOSIUS.

on his cold bloody breast
Shou'd see me breathless lye.

Thornthwaite sculp.

London. Printed for J. Bell British Library, Strand. March 23 1793.

THEODOSIUS;

OR,

THE FORCE OF LOVE.

TRAGEDY,

By NATHANIEL LEE.

ADAPTED FOR

THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRES-ROYAL,

DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,

By Permission of the Managers.

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation.

LONDON:

[redacted]*d for the Proprietors, under the Direction of*

[redacted]BELL, British Library, STRAND,

[redacted]ler to His Royal Highness the PRINCE of WALES.

MDCCXCIII.

TO HER GRACE

THE DUCHESS OF RICHMOND.

MADAM,

THE reputation that this play received on the stage, some few errors excepted, was more than I could well hope from so censorious an age; from whom I ask but so much necessary praise as will serve once or twice a-year at most, to gain their good company, and just keep me alive.

> There is not now that mankind that was then,
> When as the sun and man did seem to strive
> (Joint tenants of the world) who should survive;
> When if a slow-pac'd star had stol'n away
> From the observer's marking he might stay
> Two or three hundred years to see't again,
> And then make up his observation plain.
>
> DR. DONNE.

For it is impossible, in our limited time, (as I bring his opinion to back my own, who is without comparison, the best writer of the age,) to present our judges a poem half so perfect as we could make it. I must acknowledge, madam, with all humility, I ought to have taken more time and more pains in this tragedy, because it is dedicated to your Grace, who being the best judge, (and therefore can when you

please make us tremble) yet with exceeding mercy have pardoned the defects of [redacted] *and given it your entire approbation. My Genius, madam, was your favourite when the poet was unknown, and openly received your smiles, before I had the honour to pay your Grace the most submissive gratitude for so illustrious and advantageous a protection. To let the world too know, that you do not think it beneath you to be officiously good, even from the extremest heights to discern the lowest creatures, and give them all the noblest influence you can, you brought her Royal Highness just at the exigent time, whose single presence on the Poet's day is a subsistence for him all the year after. Ah, madam! if all the short-lived happiness that miserable poets can enjoy consists in commendation only; nay, if the most part are content with popular breath, and even for that are thankful, how shall I express myself to your Grace, who by a particular goodness and innate sweetness, merely for the sake of doing well, have thus raised me above myself? To have your Grace's favour is, in a word, to have the applause of the whole court, who are its noblest ornament; magnificent and eternal praise. Something there is in your mien, so much above that we vulgarly call charming, that to me it seems adorable, and your presence almost divine, whose dazzling and majestic form is a proper mansion for the most elevated soul. [redacted] let me tell the world sighing speak it to a barbarous age. (I cannot*

calling it so when I think of Rome or Greece) your extraordinary love for heroic poetry is not the least argument to shew the greatness of your mind and fulness of perfection. To hear you speak with that infinite sweetness and chearfulness of spirit that is natural to your Grace is, methinks, to hear our tutelar angels; it is to bemoan the present malicious times, and remember the golden age; but to behold you too is to make prophets quite forget their heaven, and bind the poets with eternal rapture.

——Her pure and eloquent blood
Spoke in her cheeks, and so distinctly wrought
That one might almost say her body thought.
You, for whose body God made better clay,
Or took souls' stuff, such as shall late decay,
Or such as need small change at the last day.

DR. DONNE.

Ziphares and Semandra were first your Grace's favourites; and though I ought not, madam, to praise your wit by your judgment of my painting, yet I must say such characters every dauber cannot draw. It has been observed against me, that I abound in ungoverned fancy; but I hope the world will pardon the sallies of youth: age, despondence, and dulness, come too fast of themselves. I discommend no man for keeping the beaten road; but I am sure the noble hunters that follow the game, must leap hedges and ditches sometimes, and run at all, or never come into the fall of the quarry. My comfort is, I cannot

be so ridiculous a creature to any man as I am to myself; for who should know the house so well as the good man at home, who when his neighbours come to see him still sets the best rooms to view, and if he is not a wild ass keeps the rubbish and lumber in some dark hole whither nobody comes but himself to mortify at melancholy hours! But how then, madam, in this unsuitable condition, how shall I answer the infinite honours and obligations your Grace has laid upon me, your Grace, who is the most beautiful idea of love and glory, who to that divine composition have the noblest and best natured wit in the world. All I can promise, madam, and am able to perform is, that your Grace shall never see a play of mine that shall give offence to modesty and virtue; and what I humbly offer to the world shall be of use at least, and I hope deserve imitation; which is or ought to be, I am sure, the design of all tragedies and comedies both ancient and modern. I should presume to promise myself too some success in things of this nature, if your Grace (in whom the charms of beauty, wit, and goodness, seem reconciled) at a leisure hour would condescend to correct with your excellent judgment the errors of,

Madam,

your Grace's most humble,
most obedient,
and devoted servant,

NAT. LEE.

THEODOSIUS;

OR,

THE FORCE OF LOVE.

THIS Tragedy, like the far greater number of our plays, is founded upon the passion of love; and displays to us the effects of its subtle influence, even upon the hearts of those, whom the lust of power might naturally be expected to withdraw from every finer sensation than that of ambition.

Some exception may be taken to a sort of underplot in this piece, as it is mean and feeble; yet I know not whether the loves of Varanes and of Theodosius are not set off by the passion of Mariana—the contrast is certainly forcible, and nothing therefore lies against it but that it contains a monotony of incident, though not of manners.

Marcian indeed always sullies the splendor of the scene—his images are frequently impure, and his expression generally coarse—He once exclaims—

> I see each starving soldier bound from earth,
> As if some god by miracle had rais'd him,
> And, with beholding you, *grow fat again.*

This play is marked strongly by that bold, but irregular flight of imagination which strained the chords

of sanity until they cracked—Yet it obviously wears the stamp of poetic power impressed by the fine fervour of a luxuriant fancy.

We are sorry to observe the necessity of genius addressing a Dutchess of Richmond in the following among other sentences of absurdity:

> "To have your Grace's favour is magnificent and eternal praise—Something there is in your mien so much "above that we vulgarly call *charming*; that to me it seems "*adorable*, and your presence almost *divine*, whose "dazzling and majestic form is a proper mansion for the "most elevated soul."

One is at a loss to decide which deserves most of our contempt or pity—the giver or receiver of such fulsome flattery. We are now fortunately estranged from such prostitution of language.

WIT long oppress'd and fill'd at last with rage,
Thus in a sullen mood rebukes the age:
What loads of fame do modern heroes bear
For an inglorious, long, and lazy war,
Who for some skirmish or a safe retreat
(Not to be dragg'd to battle) are call'd great!
But oh! what do ambitious statesmen gain
Who into private chests all nations drain?
What sums of gold they hoard is daily known
To all mens' cost, and sometimes to their own.
Your lawyer too, that like an O yes bawls,
That drowns the market higglers in the stalls,
That seem begot, conceiv'd, and born, in brawls,
Yet thrives: he and his crowd get what they please;
Swarming all term-time thro' the Strand like bees,
They buzz at Westminster and lie for fees.
The godly too their ways of getting have,
But none so much as your fanatick knave;
Wisely the wealthiest livings they refuse
Who by the fattest bishoprics would lose,
Who with short hair, large ears, and small blue band,
True rogues! their own not God's elect command.
Let pigs then be prophane, but both's allow'd;
Posset and Christian caudles may be good,
Meet helps to reinforce a brother's brood;

Therefore each female saint he doth advise
With groans, and hums, and has, and goggling eyes,
To rub him down and make the spirit rise,
While with his zeal transported, from the ground
He mounts, and sanctifies the sisters round.
On poets only no kind star e'er smil'd;
Curst fate has damn'd 'em ev'ry mother's child;
Therefore he warns his brothers of the stage
To write no more for an ungrateful age.
Think what penurious masters you have serv'd;
Tasso ran mad, and noble Spenser starv'd:
Turn then, whoe'er thou art, that canst write well,
Thy ink to gall, and in lampoons excel;
Forswear all honesty, traduce the great,
Grow impudent, and rail against the state;
Bursting with spleen abroad thy pasquils send,
And choose some libel spreader for thy friend:
The wit and want of Timon point thy mind,
And for thy satire subject choose mankind.

Dramatis Personæ.

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

THEODOSIUS,	Mr. Brereton.
VARANES,	Mr. Barry.
MARCIAN,	Mr. Aickin.
LUCIUS,	Mr. Keen.
ATTICUS, Chief Priest,	Mr. J. Aickin.
LEONTINE,	Mr. Hurst.
ARANTHES,	Mr. Davies.

Women.

PULCHERIA,	Miss Sherry.
ATHENAIS,	Mrs. Barry.

Attendants, Chorus.

SCENE, Constantinople.

THEODOSIUS.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A stately Temple, which represents the Christian Religion as in it's first Magnificence, being but lately established at Rome and Constantinople; the Side-scenes show the horrid Tortures with which the Roman Tyrants persecuted the Church, and the flat Scene, which is the Limit of the Prospect, discovers an Altar richly adorned; before it CONSTANTINE *(supposed) kneels, with Commanders about him, gazing at a bloody Cross in the Air, which being encompassed with many Angels offers itself to view with these Words distinctly written,* In hoc signo vinces. *Instruments are heard, and many Attendants; the Ministers at Divine Service walk busily up and down 'till* ATTICUS, *the Chief of all the Priests, and Successor of* St. CHRYSOSTOM, *in rich Robes comes forward with the Philosopher* LEONTINE, *the Waiters in Ranks bowing all the Way before him.*

A Chorus heard at a Distance.

PREPARE, prepare! the rites begin,
Let none unhallow'd enter in;

The temples with new glories shines,
Adorn the altars, wash the shrines,
And purge the place from sin.

Attic. Oh Leontine! was ever morn like this
Since the celestial incarnation dawn'd?
I think no day since that such glory gave
To Christian altars as this morning brings.

Leon. Great successor of holy Chrysostom,
" Who now triumphs above, a saint of honour,
" Next in degree to those bright sons of heaven
" Who never fell nor stain'd their orient beams,"
What shall I answer, how shall I approach you
Since my conversion, which your breath inspir'd?

Attic. To see this day the emp'ror of the east
Leaves all the pleasures that the earth can yield,
" That Nature can bestow or art invent.
" In his life's spring and bloom of gawdy years,
" Confin'd to narrow rooms and gloomy walks,
" Fasting and exercises of devotion,
" Which from his bed at midnight must awake him,"
To undergo the penance of a cloister, —
Methinks, oh Leontine! 'tis something more
Than yet philosophy could ever reach.

Leon. True, Atticus; you have amaz'd my reason.

Attic. Yet more to our religion's lasting honour
Mariana and Flavilla, two young virgins
Imperial born, cast in the fairest mould
That e'er the hand of beauty form'd for woman,
" The mirrors of our court, where chastity

" And innocence might copy spotless lustre,"
To-day with Theodosius leave the world.
Leon. Methinks at such a glorious resignation
Th' angelic order should at once descend
" In all the paint and drapery of heaven,
" With charming voices and with lulling strings,"
To give full grace to such triumphant zeal.
Attic. No, Leontine; I fear there is a fault,
For when I last confess'd the emperor,
" Whether disgust and melancholy blood
" From restless passions urg'd not this divorce?"
He only answer'd me with sighs and blushes.
'Tis sure his soul is of the tend'rest make,
Therefore I'll tax him strictly: but, my friend,
Why should I give his character to you,
Who when his father sent him into Persia
Were by that mighty monarch then appointed
To breed him with his son, the Prince Varanes?
Leon. And what will raise your admiration is,
That two such diff'rent tempers should agree.
You know that Theodosius is composed
Of all the softness that should make a woman:
Judgment almost like fear foreruns his actions,
And he will poise an injury so long
As if he had rather pardon than revenge it;
But the young Persian prince, quite opposite,
So fiery fierce that those who view him nearly
May see his haughty soul still mounting in his face;
Yet did I study these so different tempers
'Till I at last had form'd a perfect union,

" As if two souls did but inform one body;
A friendship that may challenge all the world,
And at the proof be matchless.

Attic. I long to read
This gallant prince, who, as you have inform'd me,
Comes from his father's court to see our emperor.

Leon. So he intended till he came to Athens,
And at my homely board beheld my daughter,
When as fate order'd she, who never saw
The glories of a court, " bred up to books
" In closets like a Sybil; she, I say,
" (Long since from Persia brought by me to Athens)"
Unskill'd in charms but those which nature gave her,
Wounded this scornful prince: in short, he forc'd me
To wait him thither, with deep protestations
That moment that bereft him of the sight
Of Athenais gave him certain death.
But see, my daughter honour'd with his presence.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter VARANES *and* ATHENAIS.

Var. 'Tis strange, oh, Athenais! wondrous all,
Wondrous the shrines, and wonderful the altars.
The martyrs—tho' but drawn in painted flames,
Amaze me with the image of their sufferings;
Saints canoniz'd, that dar'd with Roman tyrants;
Hermits that liv'd in caves and fed with angels,
By Orosmades it is wondrous all!
That bloody cross in yonder azure sky,
Above the head of kneeling Constantine,

Inscrib'd about with golden characters
Thou shalt o'ercome in this; if it be true,
I say again, by heaven 't is wondrous strange.
Athen. Oh, prince! if thus imagination stirs you,
A fancy rais'd from figures in dead walls,
How would the sacred breath of Atticus
Inspire your breast, purge all your dross away,
And drive this Athenais from your soul;
" To make a virgin room whom yet the mould
" Of your rude fancy cannot comprehend!"
Var. What says my fair! drive Athenais from me!
" Start me not into phrenzy, lest I rail
" At all religion and fall out with Heaven."
And what is she, alas! that would supplant thee?
Were she the mistress of the world, as fair
As winter stars or summer setting suns,
And thou set by in nature's plainest dress,
With that chaste, modest look, when first I saw thee,
The heiress of a poor philosopher, [*Recorders ready to flourish.*
I swear by all I wish, by all I love,
Glory and thee, I would not lose a thought
Nor cast an eye that way, but rush to thee,
To these lov'd arms, and lose myself for ever.
Athen. Forbear, my lord.
Var. Oh! cruel Athenais!
Why dost thou put me off who pine to death,
And thrust me from thee when I would approach thee!
Can there be aught in this? Curse then thy birthright,
Thy glorious titles and ill-suited greatness,

Since Athenais scorns thee: take again
Your ill-tim'd honours; take 'em, take 'em, gods,
And change me to some humble villager,
If so at last for toils at scorching noon,
In mowing meadows, or in reaping fields,
At night she will but crown me with a smile,
Or reach the bounty of her hand to bless me.

Athen. When princes speak their subjects should be silent;
Yet with humility I would demand
Wherein appears my scorn or my aversion?
Have I not for your sake abandon'd home,
Where I had vow'd to spend my calmer days?
But you, perhaps, imagine it but little,
For a poor maid to follow you abroad,
Especially the daughter of old Leontine;
Yet I must tell you, prince——

Var. I cannot bear
Those frowns: I have offended; but forgive me;
For who, oh Athenais! that is toss'd
With such tempestuous tides of love as I
Can steer a steady course? Retire, my fair.

[*Recorders flourish.*

Hark! the solemnities are now beginning,
And Theodosius comes. Hide, hide thy charms;
If to his clouded eyes such day should break,
The royal youth, who dotes to death for love,
I fear would forfeit all his vows to Heaven,
And fix upon the world, the world of beauty.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter THEODOSIUS *leading* MARIANA *and* FLAVILLA, *followed by* PULCHERIA, *all three dressed in white.*

Theo. Farewell, Pulcheria, and I pray no more,
For all thy kind complaints are lost upon me.
Have I not sworn the world and I must part?
Fate has proclaim'd it; therefore weep no more:
" Wound not the tend'rest part of Theodosius,
" My yielding soul, that would expire in calms:
Wound me not with thy tears and I will tell thee.
Yet ere I take my last farewell for ever,
The cause of all my suff'rings. Oh, my sister!
A bleeding heart, the stings of pointed love,
What constitution soft as mine can bear?

Pulch. My lord, my emperor, my dearest brother
Why all this while did you conceal it from me?

Theo. Because I was asham'd to own my weakness
" I knew thy sharper wit and stricter wisdom
" Would dart reproofs which I could not endure."
Draw near, oh Atticus! and mark me well,
For never yet did my complaining spirit
Unlade this weighty secret on him,
Nor groan a syllable of her oppression.

Attic. Concealment was a fault; but speak at large,
Make bare the wound, and I will pour in balm.

Theo. 'Tis folly all and fondness—Oh remembrance!
Why dost thou open thus my wound again,
And from my heart call down those warmer drops
That make me die with shame? Hear then, Pulcheria:
Some few preceding days before I left

The Persian court, hunting one morning early
I lost myself and all the company.
Still wand'ring on as fortune should direct me
I past a rivulet, and lighted in
The sweetest solitude I ever saw;
When strait, as if enchantment had been there,
Two charming voices drew me 'till I came
Where divers arbours overlook'd the river.
Upon the osier bank two women sat,
Who when their song was ended talk'd to one
Who bathing stood far in the chrystal stream:
But oh! what thought can paint that fair perfection,
Or give a glimpse of such a naked glory?
Not sea-born Venus in the courts beneath,
When the green nymphs first kiss'd her coral lips,
All polish'd fair and wash'd with orient beauty,
Could in my dazzling fancy match her brightness.

Attic. Think where you are.

Theo. Oh, sir! you must forgive me:
The chaste enthusiastic form appears
As when I saw her; yet I swear, Pulcheria,
Had cold Diana been a looker on
She must have prais'd the virtues of the virgin.
"The Satyrs could not grin," for she was veil'd;
From her naked bosom
Down to her knees the nymph was wrapp'd in lawn:
But oh: for me, for me, that was too much!
"Her legs, her arms, her hands, her neck, her breasts,
"So nicely shap'd, so matchless in their lustre;"
Such all-perfection, that I took such draughts

Of killing love, and ever since have languish'd
With ling'ring surfeits of her fatal beauty:
" Alas! too fatal sure!"——Oh, Atticus!
Forgive me, for my story now is done.
The nymph was dress'd, and with her two companions,
Having descry'd me, shriek'd and fled away,
Leaving me motionless—'till Leontine,
Th' instructor of my youth, by chance came in,
And wak'd me from the wonder that entranc'd me.

Attic. Behold, my lord, the man whom you have nam'd
The harbinger of Prince Varanes here.

Enter LEONTINE.

Theo. Oh, Leontine, ten thousand welcomes meet thee!
Thou foster father of my tender youth,
" Who rear'd the plant and prun'd it with such care,
" How shall I look upon thee, who am fall'n
" From all the principles of manlier reason,
" By thee infus'd, to more than woman's weakness."
Now by the majesty divine that awes
This sacred place I swear you must not kneel!
And tell me, for I have a thousand things
To ask thee; where, where is my godlike friend?
Is he arriv'd, and shall I see his face
Before I'm cloister'd from the world for ever?

Leon. He comes, my lord, with all th' expecting joys
Of a young promis'd lover: from his eyes
Big hopes look forth, and boiling fancy forms

Nothing but Theodosius still before him:
His thought, his ev'ry word, is Theodosius.

Theo. Yet, Leontine, yet answer me once more;
With tremblings I demand thee.
Say——hast thou seen, oh! has that heavenly form
Appear'd to thee again?——Behold, he's dumb:
Proceed then to the solemn last farewell;
Never was man so willing and prepar'd.

Enter VARANES, ARANTHES, *and Attendants.*

Var. Where is my friend? oh, where is my belov'd,
My Theodosius! point him out ye gods!
That I may press him dead betwixt my arms,
Devour him thus with over-hasty joys
That languish at his breast quite out of breath,
And cannot utter more.

Theo. Thou mightiest pleasure,
And greatest blessing, that kind Heaven could send
To glad my parting soul, a thousand welcomes!
Oh! when I look on thee new starts of glory
Spring in my breast, and with a backward bound
I run the race of lusty youth again.

Var. By heaven it joys me too, when I remember
Our thousand pastimes, when we borrow'd names,
Alcides I, and thou my dearest Theseus,
When thro' the woods we chas'd the foaming boar
With hounds that open'd like Thessalian bulls,
Like tigers flu'd, and sanded as the shore,
With ears and chests that dash'd the morning dew;
Driven with a spurt, as ships are tost in storms,

We ran like hinds, and matchless was our course!
Now sweeping o'er the limit of a hill,
Now with a full career came thund'ring down
The precipice and sweat along the vale.

Theo. Oh, glorious time! and when the gath'ring clouds
Have call'd us home, say, did we rest my brother?
When on the stage to the admiring court
We strove to represent Alcides' fury,
In all that raging heat and pomp of madness
With which the stately Seneca adorn'd him,
So lively drawn, and painted with such horror
That we were forc'd to give it o'er, so loud
The virgin's shriek'd, so fast they dy'd away.

Var. My Theodosius still; 'tis my lov'd brother!
And by the gods we 'll see those times again!
Why then has rumour wrong'd thee, that reported
Christian enthusiasm had charm'd thee from us;
That drawn by priests, and work'd by melancholy,
Thou hadst laid the golden reins of empire down
And sworn yourself a votary for ever?

Theo. 'Tis almost true; and had not you arriv'd
The solemn business had by this been ended.
This I have made the empress of the east
My elder sister: these with me retire,
Devoted to the power whom we adore.

Var. What power is that that merits such oblations?
I thought the sun more great and glorious
Than any that e'er mingled with the gods,
Yet ev'n to him my father never offer'd

More than a hecatomb of bulls and horses.
Now, by those golden beams that glad the world,
I swear it is too much: for one of these
But half so bright our god would drive no more;
He 'd leave the darken'd globe, and in some cave
Enjoy such charms for ever.

Attic. My lord, forbear;
Such language does not suit with our devotions:
Nothing profane must dare to murmur here,
Nor stain the hallow'd beauties of the place.
But thus far we must yield! the emperor
Is not enough prepar'd to leave the world.

Var. Thus low, most reverend of this sacred place,
I bow for pardon, and am half converted,
By your permission that my Theodosius
Return to my embraces. Oh, my brother!
Why dost thou droop? there will be time enough
For prayer and fasting, and religious vows;
Let us enjoy, while yet thou art my own,
All the magnificence of eastern courts.
I hate to walk a lazy life away;
Let's run the race which fate has set before us,
And post to the dark goal.

" *Theo.* Cruel destiny!
" Why am not I thus too? Oh, my Varanes!
" Why are these costly dishes set before me?
" Why do these sounds of pleasure strike my ears?
" Why are these joys brought, to my sick remembrance,
" Who have no appetite, but am to sense
" From head to foot all a dead palsy o'er?

" *Var.* Fear not, my friend; all shall be well
" Again; for I have thousand ways and thousand stories
" To raise thee up to pleasure. We'll unlock
" Our fastest secrets, shed upon each other
" Our tend'rest cares, and quite unbar those doors
" Which shall be shut to all mankind beside."

Attic. Silence and rev'rence are the temple's dues,
Therefore while we pursue the sacred rites
Be these observ'd, or quit the awful place.
" Imperial sisters, now twin stars of Heaven,
" Answer the successor of Chrysostom;
" Without least reservation answer me;
" By those harmonious rules I charg'd ye learn."

ATTICUS *sings.*

Attic. *Canst thou, Marina, leave the world,*
The world that is devotion's bane,
Where crowns are tost and sceptres hurl'd,
Where lust and proud ambition reign?

2. Pr. " *Can you your costly robes forbear,*
" *To live with us in poor attire?*
" *Can you from courts to cells repair,*
" *To sing at midnight in our choir?*

3. Pr. " *Can you forget your golden beds,*
" *Where you might sleep beyond the morn,*
" *On mats to lay your royal heads,*
" *And have your beauteous tresses shorn?*

Attic. " *Can you resolve to fast all day,*
" *And weep and groan to be forgiven?*
" *Can you in broken slumbers pray,*
" *And by affliction merit heaven?*

Chor. *Say, Votaries, can this be done?*
While we the grace divine implore,
The world is lost, the battles's won,
And sin shall never charm ye more.

MARINA *sings.*

The gate to bliss does open stand,
And all my penance is in view;
The world upon the other hand
Cries out, Oh do not bid adieu!

" *Yet, sacred, sir, in these extremes,*
" *Where pomp and pride their glories tell,*
" *Where youth and beauty are the themes,*
" *And plead their moving cause so well.*"

If aught that's vain my thoughts possess,
Or any passions govern here,
But what divinity may bless,
Oh, may I never enter there!

FLAVILLA *sings.*

" *What can pomp or glory do,*
" *Or what can human charms persuade?*
" *That mind that has a heaven in view,*
" *How can it be by earth betray'd?*

" No monarch, full of youth and fame,
" The joy of eyes and nature's pride,
" Should once my thoughts from Heaven reclaim,
" Tho' now he woo'd me for his bride."

Haste then, oh haste! and take us in,
For ever lock religion's door;
Secure us from the charms of sin,
And let us see the world no more.

ATTICUS *sings.*

Hark, hark! behold the heavenly choir,
They cleave the air in bright attire,
And see his lute each angel brings,
And hark! divinely thus he sings:
To the Pow'rs divine all glory be given,
By men upon earth and angels in Heaven.

[*Scene shuts, and all the* Priests, *with* Marina *and* Flavilla, *disappear.*

Pulch. For ever gone! for ever parted from me!
Oh Theodosius! till this cruel moment
I never knew how tenderly I lov'd em;
But on this everlasting separation
Methinks my soul has left me, and my time
Of dissolution points me to the grave.

Theo. Oh, my Veranes! does not now thy temper
Bate something of its fire? Dost thou not melt
In mere compassion of my sister's fate,
And cool thyself with one relenting draught?

Var. Yes, my dar'd soul rolls inward; melancholy,

Which I ne'er felt before, now comes upon me,
And I begin to loathe all human greatness:
Oh! sigh not then, nor thy hard fate deplore,
For 'tis resolv'd we will be kings no more:
We'll fly all courts, and love shall be our guide,
Love, that's more worth than all the world beside.
Princes are barr'd the liberty to roam;
The fetter'd mind still languishes at home;
In golden bands she treads the thoughtful round,
Business and cares eternally abound;
And when for air the goddess would unbind,
She's clogg'd with sceptres, and to crowns confin'd.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

The Palace. *Enter* PULCHERIA, JULIA, *and Attendants.*

Pulcheria.

THESE packets for the emperor Honorius:
Be swift, and let th' agent haste to Rome.
I hear, my Julia, that our general
Is from the Goths return'd with conquest home.

Jul. He is; to-day I saw him in the presence
Sharp to the courtiers, as he ever was,
Because they went not with him to the wars:
To you he bows, and shes to kiss your hand.

Pulch. He shall, my dearest Julia! Oft' I 've told thee

The secret of my soul. If e'er I marry
Marcian's my husband: he 's a man, my Julia,
Whom I 've study'd long, and found him perfect;
Old Rome at ev'ry glance looks thro' his eyes
And kindles the beholders. Some sharp atoms
Run thro' his frame which I could wish were out:
He sickens at the softness of the emp'ror,
And speaks too freely of our female court,
Then sighs, comparing it with what Rome was.

Enter MARCIAN *and* LUCIUS.

Pulch. Ha! who are these that dare profane this place
With more than barb'rous insolence?

Mar. At your feet
Behold I cast the scourge of these offenders,
And kneel to kiss your hand.

Pulch. Put up your sword;
And ere I bid you welcome from the wars
Be sure you clear your honour of this rudeness,
Or, Marcian, leave the court.

Mar. Thus then, madam:
The emperor receiv'd me with affection,
Embrac'd me for my conquests, and retir'd;
When on a sudden all the gilded flies
That buzz about the court came flutt'ring round me:
This with affected cringes and minc'd words
Begs me to tell my tale of victories;
Which done he thanks me, slips behind his fellow,
Whispers him in the ear, then smiles and listens

While I relate my story once again:
A third comes in and asks me the same favour,
Whereon they laugh, while I, still ignorant,
Go on; but one behind, *more* impudent,
Strikes on my shoulder, then they laugh'd outright;
But then I, guessing the abuse too late,
Return'd my knight behind a box o' the ear,
Then drew, and briefly told them they were rascals:
They, laughing still, cry'd out the general's musty;
Whereon I drove 'em, madam, as you saw.
This is, in short, the truth; I leave the judgment
To your own justice: if I have done ill
Sentence me, and I'll leave the court for ever.

Pulch. First, you are welcome, Marcian, from the wars,
And still, whene'er occasion calls for arms,
Heav'n send the emperor a general
Renown'd as Marcian! As to what is past,
I think the world will rather praise than censure
Pulcheria, when she pardons you the action.

Mar. Gods, gods! and thou great founder of old Rome!
What is become of all that mighty spirit
That rais'd our empire to a pitch so high?
"Where is it pent? What but almighty pow'r
"Could thus confine it, that but some few atoms
"Now run thro' all the east and Occident?"

Pulch. Speak calmly, Marcian——

Mar. Who can be temperate
That thinks as I do, madam? Why! here 's a fellow,

I 've seen him fight against a troop of Vandals
In your defence, as if he lov'd to bleed.
" Come to my arms, my dear! thou canst not talk,
" But has a soul above the proudest of 'em.
" Oh, madam! when he has been all over blood,
" And hack'd with wounds that seem'd to mouth his praises,
" I've seen him smile still as he push'd death from him,
" And with his actions rally distant fate.
" *Pulch.* He has a noble form."
Mar. Yet, ev'n this man,
That fought so bravely in his country's cause,
This excellent man, this morning, in the presence,
Did I see wrong'd before the emperor;
Scorn'd and despis'd, because he could not cringe,
Nor plant his feet as some of them could do.
" One said his clothes were not well made, and damn'd
" His taylor——another said he look'd
" As if he had not lost his maidenhead."
If things are suffer'd to be thus, down all
Authority, pre-eminence, degree, and virtue;
Let Rome be never mention'd; no, i' th' name
Of all the gods be she forgotten ever!
Effeminate Persians and the Lydian softness
Make all your fights: Marcian shall out no more,
For by my arms it makes a woman of me;
And my swol'n eyes run o'er, to think this worth,
This fuller honour than the whole court holds,
Should be ridiculous to knaves and fools,

" Should starve for want of what is necessary
" To life's convenience, when luxurious bawds
" Are so o'ergrown with fat and cramm'd with riot,
" That they can hardly walk without an engine."

Pulch. Why did not you inform the emperor?

Mar. Because he will not hear me. Alas! good man,
He flies from this bad world; and still when wars
And dangers come, he runs to his devotions;
To your new thing—I know not what you call it,
Which Constantine began.

Pulch. How, Marcian! are not you
Of that religion which the emp'ror owns?

Mar. No, madam. If you 'll see my honest thoughts,
I am not of their principle that take
A wrong; so far from bearing with a foe
I would strike first, like old Rome; " I would forth,
" Elbow the neighb'ring nations round about,
" Invade, enlarge my empire to the bounds
" Of the too narrow universe. Yes, I own
" That I despise your holy innovations;
" I 'm for the Roman gods, for funeral piles,
" For mounting eagles, and the fancy'd greatness
" Of our forefathers." Methinks my heated spirit
Could utter things worth losing of my head.

Pulch. Speak freely, Marcian, for I know thee honest.

Mar. Oh, madam, long, long may the emp'ror live!
But I must say his gentle disposition
Suits not, alas! the oriental sway:
" Bid him but look on Pharamond; oh Gods!

" Awake him with the image of that spirit
" Which, like a pyramid revers'd, is grown
" Ev'n from a point to the most dreadful greatness;
" His very name already shakes the world,
" And still in person heading his fierce squadrons,
" Like the first Cæsar o'er the hardy Gauls,
" He seems another thunderbolt of war."

Pulch. I oft' have blam'd my brother most for this,
That to my hand he leaves the state affairs;
And how that sounds you know———

Mar. Forgive me, madam!
I think that all the greatness of your sex,
Rome's Clelia, and the fam'd Semiramis,
" With all the Amazonian valour too,"
Meet in Pulcheria: yet I say forgive me,
If with reluctance I behold a woman
Sit at the empire's helm and steer the world!

Pulch. I stand rebuk'd———

Mar. " Mark but the growing French:
" The most auspicious omen of their greatness
" That I can guess is their late Salique law,
" Bless'd by their priests the Salii, and pronounc'd
" To stand for ever, which excludes all women
" From the imperial crown." But oh! I speak
The least of all those infinite grievances
Which make the subjects murmur. In the army,
Tho' I proceeded still like Hannibal,
And punish'd ev'ry mutineer with death,
Yet oh! it stabb'd me thro' and thro' the soul
To pass the wretches' doom, because I knew

With justice they complain'd; for hard they fought,
And with their blood earn'd that forbidden bread
Which some at court, and great ones, tho' unnam'd,
Cast to their hounds, while the poor soldiers starv'd—

Pulch. Your pity too, in mournful fellowship,
No doubt might soothe their murmurs.

Mar. Yes, it did;
That I might put them once again in heart
I said 't was true the emp'ror was to blame,
Who dealt too coldly with his faithful servants,
And paid their great arrears by second-hands:
I promis'd too, when we return'd to court,
Things should be mended———
But how, oh gods! forgive my blood this transport;
To the eternal shame of female counsels,
And to the blast of Theodosius' name,
Whom never warlike chronicle shall mention,
"Oh, let me speak it with a Roman spirit!';
We were receiv'd like undone prodigals,
By curs'd ungrateful stewards, with cold looks,
Who yet got all by those poor wretches' ruin,
"Like malefactors at the hands of justice.
"I blush, I almost weep, with bursting rage;
"If thus receiv'd how paid our long arrears?
"Why, as intrusted misers pay the rights
"Of helpless widows or the orphans' tears.
"Oh, soldier! for to thee, to thee I speak it,
"Bawds for the drudgery of citizens' wives
"Would better pay debilitated stallions."
Madam, I 've said perhaps too much; if so

It matters not; for he who lies, like me,
On the hard ground, is sure to fall no further.
Pulch. I 've given you patient hearing, honest Marcian,
And as far as I can see into your temper,
" I speak my serious judgment in cold blood,
" With strictest consultation on the matter,"
I think this seeming plain and honest Marcian
An exquisite and most notorious traitor.
Mar. Ha! traitor!
Pulch. Yes, a most notorious traitor.
" *Mar.* Your grandfather, whose frown could awe the world,
" Would not have call'd me so—or if he had——
Pulch. " You would have taken it."——But to the bus'ness.
Was't not enough, oh heaven thou know'st too much!
At first to own yourself an infidel,
A bold contemner, ev'n to blasphemy,
Of that religion which we all profess,
For which your heart's best blood can ne'er suffice,
But you must dare, with a seditious army,
Thus to conspire against the emperor?
I mention not your impudence to me,
Taxing the folly of my government
Ev'n to my face, such an irreverence
As sure no barb'rous Vandal would have urg'd;
Besides your libelling all the court, as if
You had engross'd the whole world's honesty,

And flatt'rers, fools, and sycophants, and knaves,
Such was your language, did inhabit there.
Mar. You wrest my honest meaning, by the gods
You do; "and if you thus go on I feel
"My struggling spirit will no longer bear it."
Pulch. I thought the meaning of all rational men
Should still be gather'd out of their discourse;
Nor are you so imprudent without thinking
To vent such words, tho' now you fain would hide it.
You find the guilt and balk the accusation.
But think not you shall scape so easily:
Once more I do confront you as a traitor;
And as I am intrusted with full pow'r,
Divest you, in the name of Theodosius,
Of all your offices, commissions, honours;
Command you leave the court within three days,
Loyal, plain-dealing, honest Marcian.
Mar. Gods! gods!
Pulch. "What now? Ha! does the traitor murmur?
"If in three days—mark me—'t is I that doom thee—
"Rash inconsiderate man, a wretch beneath
"The torments I could execute upon thee,"
If after three days space thou 'rt found in court
Thou dy'st; thy head, thy head shall pay the forfeit.
"Now rage, now rail, and curse the court;
"Saucily dare t' abuse the best of princes,
"And let thy lawless tongue lash all it can;
"Do, like a madman rave, deplore thy fortune,
"While pages laugh at thee." Then haste to th' army,

Grow popular, and lead the multitude;
Preach up thy wrongs, and drive the giddy beast
To kick at Cæsar. Nay, if thou weep'st I 'm gone.
Oh, Julia! if I stay I shall weep too.
Yet 't is but just that I the heart should see
Of him who yet must lord it over me. [*Aside.*

Exeunt Pulch. *and* Julia.

Luc. Why do you droop, sir?——Come, no more o' this;
You are and shall be still our general.
Say but the word, I'll fill the Hippodrome
With squadrons that shall make the emp'ror tremble.
We'll fire the court about his ears.
Methinks, like Junius Brutus, I have watch'd
An opportunity, and now it comes—
Few words and I are friends; but, noble Marcian!
If yet thou art not more than general
Ere dead of night say Lucius is a coward.

Mar. I charge thee, in the name of all the gods,
Come back; I charge thee by the name of friend.
All 's well, and I rejoice I am no general.
But hush! within three days we must begone,
And then, my friend, farewell to ceremony?
We'll fly to some far distant lonely village,
Forget our former state, and breed with slaves,
And when night comes,
With bodies coarsely fill'd, and vacant souls,
Sleep like the labour'd hinds, and never think,
For if I think again I shall go mad:

Enter LEONTINE *and* ATHENAIS.

Therefore no thought. But see, we're interrupted,
Oh court! oh emperor! yet let death threaten
I'll find a time; 'till then be still my soul——
" No general now; a member of thy country,
" But most corrupt, therefore to be cut off;
" Loyal, plain-dealing, honest Marcian.
" A slave, a traitor! Oh, ye eternal gods!"—
[*Exeunt.*

Leon. So Athenais, now our compliment
To the young Persian prince is at an end,
What then remains but that we take our leave,
And bid him everlastingly farewell?

Athen. My lord!

Leon. I say that decency requires
We should be gone, nor can you stay with honour.

Athen. Most true, my lord!

Leon. The court is now at peace,
The emperor's sister's are retir'd for ever,
And he himself compos'd; what hinders then
But that we bid adieu to Prince Varanes?

Athen. Ah, sir! why will ye break my heart?

Leon. I would not;
Thou art the only comfort of my age:
Like an old tree I stand amongst the storms;
Thou art the only limb that I have left me, [*She kneels.*
My dear green branch! and now I prize thee, child,
Heaven only knows. Why dost thou kneel and weep?

Athen. Because you are so good, and will, I hope,
Forgive my faults, who first occasion'd it.

Leon. I charg'd thee to receive and hear the prince.

Athen. You did! and oh! my lord, I heard too much,
Too much, I fear, for my eternal quiet.

Leon. Rise Athenais; credit him who bears
More years than thou: Varanes has deceiv'd thee.

Athen. How do we differ then? You judge the prince,
Impious and base, while I take Heaven to witness
I think him the most virtuous of men;
Therefore take heed, my lord, how you accuse him
Before you make the trial. Alas, Varanes!
If thou art false there's no such thing on earth
As solid goodness or substantial honour.
A thousand times, my lord, he has sworn to give me
(And I believe his oaths) his crown and empire
That day I make him master of my heart.

Leon. That day he 'll make thee mistress of his pow'r,
Which carries a foul name among the vulgar.
No, Athenais, let me see thee dead,
Borne a pale corpse, and gently laid in earth,
So I may say she 's chaste and dy'd a virgin,
Rather than view thee with these wounded eyes
Seated upon the throne of Isdigerdes,
The blast of common tongues, the nobles' scorn
Thy father's curse, that is, the prince's whore.

Athen. Oh, horrid supposition! how I detest it
Be witness Heaven that sees my secret thoughts!

" Have I for this, my lord, been taught by you
" The nicest justice and severest virtue,
" To fear no death, to know no end of life,
" And with long search discern the highest good?
" No Athenais; when the day beholds thee
" So scandalously rais'd, pride cast thee down;
" The scorn of honour and the people's prey!"
No, cruel Leontine, not to redeem.
That aged head from the descending axe,
Not tho' I saw thy trembling body rack'd,
Thy wrinkles all about thee fill'd with blood,
Would I for empire, to the man I love
Be made the object of unlawful pleasure.

Leon. Oh greatly said, and by the blood which warms me!
Which runs as rich as any Athens holds,
It would improve the virtue of the world
If ev'ry day a thousand votaries
And thousand virgins came from far to hear thee!

Athen. Look down, ye pow'rs, take notice we obey
The rigid principles ye have infus'd;
Yet oh, my noble father! to convince you,
Since you will have it so, propose a marriage,
Tho' with the thought I 'm cover'd o'er with blushes:
Not that I doubt the prince; that were to doubt
The heavens themselves. I know he is all truth:
But modesty——————
The virgin's troublesome and constant guest,
That, that alone forbids——————

Leon. I wish to Heaven

There prove no greater bar to my relief.
Behold the prince: I will retire a while,
And when occasion calls come to thy aid. [*Exit* Leon.

Enter VARANES *and* ARANTHES.

Var. To fix her on the throne to me seems little;
Were I a god yet would I raise her higher;
This is the nature of thy prince: but oh!
As to the world thy judgment soars above me,
And I am dar'd with this gigantic honour;
Glory forbids her prospect to a crown,
Nor must she gaze that way: my haughty soul
That day when she ascends the throne of Cyrus,
Will leave my body pale, and to the stars
Retire in blushes, and quite lost for ever.

Aran. What do you purpose then?

Var. I know not what.
But see, she comes, the glory of my arms;
The only business of my constant thought,
My soul's best joy, and all my true repose.
I swear I cannot bear these strange desires,
These strong impulses, which will shortly leave me
Dead at thy feet———

Athen. What have you found, my lord,
In me so harsh or cruel that you fear
To speak your griefs?

Var. First let me kneel and swear,
And on thy hand seal my religious vow:
Straight let the breath of gods blow me from earth,
Swept from the book of fame, forgotten ever,

If I prefer thee not, oh Athenais!
To all the Persian greatness.

Athen. I believe you,
For I have heard you swear as much before.

Var. Hast thou? oh, why then did I swear again,
But that my love knew nothing worthier of thee,
And could no better way express my passion?

Athen. Oh, rise my lord!——

Var. I will do ev'ry thing
Which Athenais bids: if there be more
In nature to convince thee of my love,
Whisper it, oh! some god, into my ear,
And on her breast thus to her list'ning soul
I'll breathe the inspiration. Wilt thou not speak?
What, but one sigh, no more! can that suffice
For all my vast expense of prodigal love?
"Oh, Athenais! what shall I say or do
"To gain the thing I wish?

"*Athen.* What's that, my lord?

"*Var.* Thus to approach thee still, thus to behold thee——
"Yet there is more."——

Athen. My lord, I dare not hear you.

Var. Why dost thou frown at what thou dost not know?
'Tis an imagination which ne'er pierc'd thee;
Yet as 't is ravishing, 'tis full of honour.

Athen. I must not doubt you, sir; but, oh! I tremble
To think if Isdigerdes should behold you,

Should hear you thus protesting to a maid
Of no degree but virtue in the world—

Var. No more of this, no more; for I disdain
All pomp when thou art by. Far be the noise
Of kings and courts from us, whose gentle souls
Our kinder stars have steer'd another way.
Free as the forest birds we 'll pair together,
Without remembering who our fathers were,
Fly to the arbours, grots, and flowery meads,
And in soft murmurs interchange our souls,
Together drink the chrystal of the stream,
Or taste the yellow fruit which autumn yields,
And when the golden ev'ning calls us home
Wing to our downy nest and sleep 'till morn.

Athen. Ah! prince! no more: forbear, forbear,
to charm me,
Since I am doom'd to leave you, sir, for ever.

Var. Hold, Athenais——

Athen. I know your royal temper,
And that high honour reigns within your breast,
Which would disdain to waste so many hours
With one of humble birth compar'd to you,
Unless strong passion sway'd your thoughts to love
her?
Therefore receive, oh prince! and take it kindly,
For none on earth but you could win it from me,
Receive the gift of my eternal love;
'Tis all I can bestow, nor is it little,
For sure a heart so coldly chaste as mine
No charms but yours, my lord, could e'er have warm'd

Var. Well have you made amends by this last comfort
For the cold dart you shot at me before:
For this last goodness, oh, my Athenais!
(For now methinks I ought to call you mine)
I 'll empty all my soul in thanks before you:
Yet oh! one fear remains, like death it chills me,
Why, my relenting love, did talk of parting!

Athen. Look there, and cease to wonder. I have sworn
T' obey my father, and he calls me hence.

Enter LEONTINE.

Var. Ha, Leontine! by which of all my actions
Have I so deeply injur'd thee to merit
The smartest wound revenge could form to end me?

Leon. Answer me now, oh prince! for virtue prompts me,
And honesty will dally now no longer:
What can the end of all this passion be?
Glory requires the strict account, and asks
What you intend at last to Athenais?

Var. How, Leontine!

Leon. You saw her, sir, at Athens, said you lov'd her:
I charg'd her humbly to receive the honour,
And hear your passion. Has she not, sir, obey'd me?

Var. She has, I thank the gods; but whither would'st thou?

Leon. Having resolv'd to visit Theodosius
You swore you would not go without my daughter,
Whereon I gave command that she should follow.

Var. Yes, Leontine, my old remembrancer,
Most learn'd of all philosophers, you did.
Leon. Thus long she has attended; you have seen her,
Sounded her virtues and her imperfections;
Therefore, dread sir, forgive this bolder charge
Which honour sounds, and now let me demand you—
Var. Now help, Aranthes, or I 'm dash'd for ever.
Aran. Whatever happens, sir, disdain the marriage.
Leon. Can your high thoughts so far forget themselves
T' admit this humble virgin for your bride?
Var. Ha!
Athen. He blushes, gods! and stammers at the question!
Leon. Why do you walk and chafe yourself, my lord?
The business is not much.
Var. How, Leontine!
Not much! I know that she deserves a crown;
Yet 't is to reason much, tho' not to love:
And sure the world would blush to see the daughter
Of a philosopher upon the throne of Cyrus.
Athen. Undone for ever!
Leon. Is this your answer, sir?
Var. Why dost thou urge me thus, and push me to
The very brink of glory? where, alas!
I look and tremble at the vast descent;
Yet e'en there to the vast bottom down
My rash advent'rer, Love, would have me leap
And grasp my Athenais with my ruin.

Leon. 'Tis well, my lord——

Var. Why dost thou then provoke me?
I thought that Persia's court had store of honour
To satisfy the height of thy ambition.
Besides, old man, my love is too well grown
To want a tutor for his good behaviour;
What he will do he of himself will do,
And not be taught by you——

Leon. I know he will not;
Fond tears away; I know, I know he will not;
But he would buy with this old man's preferment
My daughter's shame.

Var. Away, I say! my soul disdains the motion.

Leon. The motion of a marriage—yes, I see it:
Your angry looks and haughty words betray it:
I found it at the first—I thank you, sir,
You have at last rewarded your old tutor
For all his cares, his watchings, services:
Yet let me tell you, sir, this humble maid,
This daughter of a poor philosopher,
Shall, if she please, be seated on a throne
As high as that of the immortal Cyrus.

Var. I think that age and deep philosophy
Have crack'd thy brain. Farewell, old Leontine;
Retire to rest; and when this brawling humour
Is rock'd asleep, I'll meet my Athenais,
And clear th' accounts of love which thou hast blotted.
[*Exit.*

Leon. Old Leontine! Perhaps I 'm mad indeed.
But hold, my heart, and let that solid virtue

Which I so long ador'd still keep the reins.
Oh, Athenais! but I will not chide thee:
Fate is in all our actions; and methinks,
At least a father judges so, it has
Rebuk'd thee smartly for thy easiness:
There is a kind of mournful eloquence
In thy dumb grief which shames all clam'rous sorrow.
"*Athen.* Alas! my breast is full of death; methinks
"I fear ev'n you ———
"*Leon.* Why should thou fear thy father?
"*Athen.* Because you have the figure of a man!"
Is there, oh speak! a possibility
To be forgiven?
Leon. Thy father does forgive thee,
And honour will; but on this hard condition,
Never to see him more ———
Athen. See him! oh heavens!
Leon. Unless it be, my daughter, to upbraid him;
Not tho' he should repent and straight return.
Nay, proffer thee his crown——No more of that.
Honour too cries revenge, revenge thy wrongs,
Revenge thyself, revenge thy injur'd father:
For 'tis revenge so wise, so glorious too,
As all the world shall praise——
Athen. Oh, give me leave,
For yet I am all tenderness: the woman,
The weak, the mild, the fond, the coward woman,
Dares not look forth, but runs about my breast,
And visits all the warmer mansions there,

Where she so oft has harbour'd false Varanes!
Cruel Varanes! false, forsworn Varanes!

Leon. Is this forgetting him? is this the course
Which honour bids thee take.

Athen. Ah, sir, allow
A little time for love to make his way:
Hardly he won the place, and many sighs,
And many tears, and thousand oaths, it cost him:
And oh! I find he will not be dislodg'd
Without a groan at parting hence for ever.
No, no! he vows he will not yet be rais'd
Without whole floods of grief at his farewell,
Which thus I sacrifice: and oh, I swear
Had he prov'd true, I would as easily
Have empty'd all my blood, and died to serve him
As now I shed these drops or vent these sighs,
To shew how well, how perfectly I lov'd him.

Leon. No woman sure but thou, so low in fortune;
Therefore the nobler is thy fair example,
Would thus have griev'd because a prince ador'd her;
Nor will it be believ'd in after-times
That there was ever such a maid in being:
Yet do I still advise preserve thy virtue;
And since he does disdain thee for his bride
Scorn thou to be——

Athen. Hold, sir; oh, hold, forbear,
For my nice soul abhors the very sound;
Blest with the shame of that, and the desire
Of an immortal name I am inspir'd:

All kinder thoughts are fled for ever from me;
All tenderness, as if I ne'er had lov'd,
Has left my bosom colder than the grave.

Leon. Oh, Athenais! on; 't is bright before thee;
Pursue the track, and thou shalt be a star.

Athen. Oh, Leontine! I swear, my noble father,
That I will starve ere once forego my virtue:
And thus let 's join to contradict the world,
That empire could not tempt a poor old man
To sell his prince the honour of his daughter,
And she too match'd the spirit of her father;
Tho' humbly born and yet more humbly bred,
She for her fame refus'd a royal bed,
Who tho' she lov'd yet did put off the hour,
Nor could her virtue be betray'd by power.
Patterns like these will guilty courts improve,
And teach the fair to blush at conscious love:
" Then let all maids for honour come in view,
" If any maid can more for glory do."

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter VARANES *and* ARANTHES.

Varanes.

COME to my arms, my faithful, dear Aranthes,
Soft counsellor, companion of my youth!
If I had longer been alone most sure,
With the distraction that surrounds my heart,

My hand would have rebell'd against his master
And done a murder here.

" *Aran.* The gods forbid!

" *Var.* I swear I press thee with as hearty joy
" As ever fearful bride embrac'd her man
" When from a dream of death she wak'd, and found
" Her lover safe and sleeping by her side."

Aran. The cause, my lord?

Var. Early thou know'st last night I went to rest;
But long, my friend, ere slumber clos'd my eyes,
Long was the combat fought 'twixt love and glory;
The fever of my passion burnt me up;
My pangs grew stronger, and my rack was doubled;
" My bed was all afloat with the cold drops
" That mortal pain wrung from my lab'ring limbs,
" My groans more deep than others' dying gasps;"
Therefore I charge thee haste to her apartment;
" I do conjure thee tell her, tell her all
" My fears can urge or fondness can invent;
" Tell her how I repent; say any thing,
" For any thing I 'll do to quench my fires:"
Say I will marry her now on the instant;
Say all that I would say, yet in the end
My love shall make it more than gods can utter.

Aran. My lord, both Leontine and she are gone
From their apartment——

Var. Ha! gone, say'st thou! whither?

Aran. That was my whole employment all this day;
But, sir, I grieve to speak it, they have left

No track behind for care to find them out;
Nor is it possible——

Var. It is, it shall;
I'll struggle with impossibilities
To find my Athenais: not the walls
Of Athens nor of Thebes shall hide her from me:
I'll bring the force of all my father's arms
And lay them waste but I'll redeem my love.
Oh, Leontine! morose old Leontine!
Thou mere philosopher! oh, cruel sage!
Who for one hasty word, one choleric doubt,
Hast turn'd the scale, tho' in the sacred balance
My life, my glory, and my empire hung!

Aran. Most sure, my lord, they are retir'd to Athens.

I will send post to-night——,

Var. No, no, Aranthes;
Prepare my chariots, for I'll go in person.
I swear 'till now, 'till I began to fear
Some other might enjoy my Athenais,
I swear I did not know how much I lov'd her.
But let's away; I'll to the emperor,
Thou to the hasty management of business.
"Prepare; to-day I'll go, to-day I'll find her:
"No more; I'll take my leave of Theodosius,
"And meet thee on the Hippodrome. Away;"
Let the wild hurry of thy master's love
Make quick thy apprehension: haste, and leave me.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter PULCHERIA, ATTICUS, LEONTINE; *Votaries leading* ATHENAIS *in Procession, after her Baptism, to be confirmed.*

" ATTICUS *sings.*

" *Oh, Chrysostom! look down and see*
" *An off'ring worthy Heaven and thee!*
" *So rich the victim, bright and fair,*
" *That she on earth appears a star:*
" Chor. *Eudosia is the virgin's name,*
" *And aftertimes shall sing her fame.*

" ATTICUS *sings.*

" *Lead her, Votaries, lead her in,*
" *Her holy birth does now begin.*
" 1 Vot. *In humble weeds, but clean array,*
" *Your hours shall sweetly pass away,*
" *And when the rites divine are past,*
" *To pleasant gardens you shall haste.*
" 2 Vot. *Where many a flow'ry bed we have,*
" *That emblem still to each a grave;*
" *And when within the stream we look,*
" *With tears we use to swell the brook;*
" *But oh! when in the liquid glass*
" *Our heaven appears, we sigh to pass:*
" Chor. *For heaven alone we are assign'd,*
" *And all things bring our heaven to mind."*

Athen. Oh, princess! oh! most worthy of the world,
That is submitted by it's emperor
To your most wise and providential sway!
What Greek or Roman eloquence can paint
The rapture and devotion of my soul!
I am adopted your's; you are my goddess,
That have new-form'd, new-moulded my conceptions,
" And by the platform of a work divine
" New-fram'd, new-built me to your own desires,
" Thrown all the lumber of my passions out,
" And made my heart a mansion of perfection!
" Clean as an anchoret's grot or votarist's cell,
" And spotless as the glories of his steps
" Whom we far off' adore."

Pulch. Rise, Eudosia,
And let me fold my Christian in my arms:
With this dear pledge of an eternal love
I seal thee, oh Eudosia! mine, for ever:
Accept, best charge, the vows of my affection,
For, by the sacred friendship that I give thee,
I think that Heaven by miracle did send thee
To ease my cares, to help me in my counsels,
To be my sister, partner in my bed,
And equally thro' my whole course of life
To be the better part of thy Pulcheria,
And share my griefs and joys.

Athen. No, madam, no;
Excuse the cares that this sad wretch must bring you.
" Oh! rather let me leave the world for ever;"
Or if I must partake your royal secrets,

" If you resolve to load me with such honour,"
Let it be far from cities, far from courts,
Where I may fly all human conversation,
Where I may never see, nor hear, nor name,
Nor think, nor dream, oh heaven! if possible,
Of mankind more.

" *Pulch.* What now! in tears Eudosia!

" *Athen.* Far from the guilt of palaces, oh, send me!
" Drive me, oh, drive me from the traitor man!
" So I might 'scape that monster, let me dwell
" In lions' haunts or in some tiger's den;
" Place me on some steep, craggy, ruin'd rock,
" That bellies out, just dropping in the ocean;
" Bury me in the hollow of its womb,
" Where, starving on my cold and flinty bed,
" I may from far, with giddy apprehension,
" See infinite fathoms down the rumbling deep;
" Yet not e'en there, in that vast whirl of death,
" Can there be found so terrible a ruin
" As man, false man, smiling, destructive man!"

Pulch. Then thou hast lov'd, Eudosia. Oh, my sister!
Still nearer to my heart, so much the dearer,
Because our fates are like, and hand in hand
Our fortunes lead us thro' the maze of life:
I 'm glad that thou hast lov'd; nay, lov'd with danger,
Since thou hast 'scap'd the ruin.—" Methinks it lightens
" The weight of my calamities, that thou,
" (In all things else so perfect and divine)
" Art yet akin to my infirmity,

" And bear'st thy part in love's melodious ill;
" Love, that like bane perfum'd, infects the mind,
" That sad delight that charms all womankind."

Athen. Yes, madam, I confess that love has charm'd me,
But never shall again: " no, I renounce him.
" Inspire me all the wrongs of abus'd woman;
" All you that have been cozen'd by false men,
" See what a strict example I will make;
" But for the perjuries of one I will revenge ye
" For all that's past, that's present, and to come.

Pulch. " Oh, thou far more than the most masculine virtue!
" Where, our Astrea, where, oh, drowning brightness!
" Where hast thou been so long? Let me again
" Protest my admiration and my love;
" Let me declare aloud, while thou art here,
" While such clear virtue shines within our circle,
" Vice shall no more appear within the palace,
" But hide her dazzled eyes, and this be call'd
" The holy court. But" lo! the emp'ror comes:
Beauty like thine may drive that far away
That has so long entranc'd his soul.——My lord——

Enter THEODOSIUS *and Attendants.*

Theo. If yet, alas! I might but hope to see her;
But oh! forgive me, Heaven, this wilder start
That thus would reach impossibility:
No, no, I never must behold her more.

As well my Atticus might raise the dead,
As Leontine should charm that form in view.

Pulch. My lord, I come to give your grief a cure
With purer flames to draw that cruel fire
That tortur'd you so long——Behold this virgin——
The daughter of your tutor, Leontine.

Theo. Ah!

"*Pulch.* She is your sister's charge, and made a Christian,
"And Athenais is Eudosia now:
"Be sure a fairer never grac'd religion,
"And for her virtue she transcends example."

Theo. Oh, all you blest above! how can this be?
Am I awake? or is this possible? [Athen. *kneels.*

Pulch. She kneels, my lord; will not you go and raise her?

Theo. Nay, do thou raise her, for I 'm rooted here;
Yet, if laborious love and melancholy
Have not o'ercome me, and quite turn'd me mad,
It must be she, that naked dazzling sweetness!
The very figure of that morning-star
That, dropping pearls and shedding dewy beams,
Fled from the greedy waves when I approach'd.
Answer me, Leontine; am I distracted,
Or is this true?——"By thee in all encounters
"I will be rul'd, in temperance and wildness,
"When reason clashes with extravagance.
"But speak"——

Leon. 'T is true, my lord; this is my daughter,
Whom I conceal'd in Persia from all eyes

But your's, when chance directed you that way.

Theo. He says 't is true: why then this heartless carriage,
This lazy spirit?
"Oh, were I proof against the darts of love,
"And cold to beauty as the marble lover
"That lies without a thought upon his tomb,
"Would not this glorious dawn of life run thro' me
"And waken death itself!" Why am I slow then.
What hinders now but that in spite of rules
I burst thro' all the bands of death that hold me,
[*He kneels.*
And fly with such a haste to that appearance
As bury'd saints shall make at the last summons?

Athen. The emperor at my feet! Oh, sir! forgive me,
Drown me not thus with everlasting shame:
Both heaven and earth must blush at such a view,
Nor can I bear it longer——

Leon. My lord, she is unworthy——

Theo. Ha! what say'st thou, Leontine?
"Unworthy! oh, thou atheist to perfection!
"All that the blooming earth could send forth fair,
"All that the gaudy heavens could drop down glorious!"
Unworthy, say'st thou! Wert thou not her father
I swear I would revenge——But haste and tell me,
For love like mine will bear no second thought
Can all the honours of the orient,
This sacrific'd with the most pure affection,
With spotless thoughts and languishing desires,

Obtain, oh, Leontine!—the crown at last—
To thee I speak—thy daughter to my bride?

Leon. My lord, the honour bears such estimation
It calls my blood into my aged cheeks,
And quite o'erwhelms my daughter with confusion,
Who with her body prostrate on the earth
Ought to adore you for the proffer'd glory.

Theo. Let me embrace and thank thee, oh, kind Heaven!
Oh Atticus! Pulcheria! oh, my father!
Was ever change like mine? Run thro' the streets;
"Who waits there?" Run, and loud as fame can speak
With trumpet sounds proclaim your emperor's joy:
"And, as of old, on the great festival
"Of her they call the mother of the gods,
"Let all work cease, at least an oaken garland
"Crown each plebeian head; let sprightly bowls
"Be dol'd about, and the toss'd cymbals sound;
"Tell them their much lamented Theodosius
"By miracle is brought from death to life;
"His melancholy's gone, and now once more
"He shall appear at the state's helm again;
"Nor fear a wreck while this bright star directs us;
"For while she shines, no sands, no treach'rous rocks
"Shall lie unseen, but I will cut my way
"Secure as Neptune thro' the highest stream,
"And to the port in safety steer the world."

Athen. Alas! my lord, consider my extraction,
With all my other wants——

Theo. Peace, empress, peace!

No more the daughter of old Leontine,
A Christian now, and partner of the east.
Athen. My father has dispos'd me, you command me;
What can I answer then but my obedience?
Theo. Attend her, dear Pulcheria! and oh, tell her
To-morrow, if she please, I will be happy.
Oh, why so long should I my joys delay?
[*Exeunt* Pulch. *and* Athen.
Time, imp thy wings, let not thy minutes stay,
But to a moment change the tedious day:
"The day! 't will be an age before to-morrow:
"An age, a death, a vast eternity
"Where we shall cold and past enjoyment lie."

Enter VARANES *and* ARANTHES.

Var. Oh, Theodosius!
Theo. Ha! my brother here!
Why dost thou come to make my bliss run o'er?
"What is there more to wish? Fortune can find
"No flaw in such a glut of happiness
"To let one misery in."——Oh, my Varanes!
Thou that of late didst seem to walk on clouds,
Now give a loose, let go the slacken'd reins,
Let us drive down the precipice of joy,
As if that all the winds of heaven were for us.
Var. My lord, I'm glad to find the gale is turn'd,
And give you joy of this auspicious fortune.
Plough on your way with all your streamers out;
With all your glorious flags and garlands ride
Triumphant on——and leave me to the waves,

The sands, the winds, the rocks, the sure destruction,
And ready gulfs that gape to swallow me.

Theo. It was thy hand that drew me from the grave,
Who had been dead by this time to ambition,
To crowns, to titles, and my slighted greatness:
But still, as if each work of thine deserv'd
The smile of Heaven——thy Theodosius met
With something dearer than his diadem,
With all that 's worth a wish, that 's worth a life;
I met with that which made me leave the world.

Var. And I, oh turn of chance! oh cursed fortune!
Have lost at once all that could make me happy.
" Oh, ye too partial powers! but now no more:
" The gods, my dear my most lov'd Theodosius,
" Double all those joys that thou hast met upon thee!
" For sure thou art most worthy, worthy more
" Than Jove in all his prodigality
" Can e'er bestow in blessings on mankind."
And oh! methinks my soul is strangely mov'd,
Takes it the more unkindly of her stars
That thou and I cannot be blest together;
For I must leave thee, friend: this night must leave thee,
To go in doubtful search of what, perhaps,
I ne'er shall find, if so my cruel fate
Has order'd it. Why then farewell for ever,
For I shall never never see thee more.

Theo. How sensible my tender soul is grown
Of what you utter! Oh, my gallant friend!
Oh, brother! oh, Varanes! do not judge

By what I speak, for sighs will interrupt me:
Judge by my tears, judge by these strict embraces.
And by my last resolve: tho' I have met
With what in silence I so long ador'd;
Tho' in the rapture of protesting joys,
I had set down to-morrow for my nuptials,
"And Atticus to-night prepares the temple,"
Yet, my Varanes! I will rob my soul
Of all her health, of my imperial bride,
And wander with thee in the search of that
On which thy life depends———

Var. If this I suffer
Conclude me then begotten of a hind,
And bred in wilds: no, Theodosius, no;
I charge thee by our friendship, and conjure thee
By all the gods, to mention this no more.
Perhaps, dear friend! I shall be sooner here
Than you expect or I myself imagine:
What most I grieve is that I cannot wait
To see your nuptials; yet my soul is with you,
And all my adorations to your bride.

Theo. What, my Varanes! will you be so cruel
As not to see my bride before you go?
Or are you angry at your rival's charms,
Who has already ravish'd half my heart,
That once was all your own?

Var. You know I am disordered;
My melancholy will not suit her blest condition.
[*Exit* Theo.
And the gods know since thou, my Athenais,

Art fled from these sick eyes, all other women
To my pall'd soul seem like the ghost of beauty,
And haunt my memory with the loss of thee.

Enter ATHENAIS, THEODOSIUS *leading her.*

Theo. Behold, my lord, th' occasion of my joy.

Var. Oh, ye immortal gods! Aranthes! oh!
Look there, and wonder. Ha! is't possible?

Athen. My lord, the emperor, says you are his friend;
He charges me to use my interest,
And beg of you to stay at least so long
As our espousals will be solemnizing:
I told him I was honour'd once to know you,
But that so slightly as I could not warrant
The grant of any thing that I should ask you——

Var. Oh heaven and earth! oh Athenais! why,
Why dost thou use me thus? Had I the world
Thou know'st it should be thine——

Athen. I know not that——
But yet, to make sure work, one half of it
Is mine already, sir, without your giving.
My lord, the prince is obstinate; his glory
Scorns to be mov'd by the weak breath of woman;
He is all hero, bent for higher views,
Therefore 'tis noble, sir, to let him go:
If not for him, my lord, yet for myself
I must entreat the favour to retire. [*Exit* Athen, *&c.*

Var. Death and despair! confusion! hell, and furies!

Theo. "Heaven guard thy health, and still preserve,
thy virtue;"

What should this mean? I fear the consequence,
For 'tis too plain they know each other well.

Var. Undone Aranthes! lost, undone for ever!
I see my doom, I read it with broad eyes,
As plain as if I saw the book of fate:
Yet I will muster all my spirits up,
Digest my grief, swallow the rising passions;
Yes, I will stand the shock of all the gods
Well as I can, and struggle for my life.

Theo. You muse, my lord; and if you 'll give me leave
To judge your thoughts, they seem employ'd at present
About my bride——"I guess you know her too."

Var. His bride! oh, gods! give me a moment's patience.
I must confess the sight of Athenais,
Where I so little did expect to see her,
So grac'd, and so adorn'd, did raise my wonder:
But what exceeds all admiration is,
That you should talk of making her your bride;
'T is such a blind effect of monstrous fortune,
That tho' I well remember you affirm'd it
I cannot yet believe——

Theo. Then now believe me:
By all the powers divine I will espouse her.

Var. Ha! I shall leap the bounds. Come, come, my lord,
By all these powers you nam'd I say you must not.

Theo. I say I will; and who shall bar my pleasure?
Yet more, I speak the judgment of my soul,
Weigh but with fortune, merit in the balance,
And Athenais loses by the marriage.

Var. Relentless fates! malicious cruel powers!
Oh, for what crime do you thus rack your creature?
Sir, I must tell you this unkingly meanness
Suits the profession of an anchorite well;
But in an Oriental emperor
It gives offence; nor can you, without scandal,
Without the notion of a grov'ling spirit,
Espouse the daughter of old Leontine,
Whose utmost glory is to 'ave been my tutor.

Theo. He has so well acquitted that employment,
Breeding you up to such a gallant height
Of full perfection and imperial greatness,
That ev'n for this respect, if for no other,
I will esteem him worthy while I live.

Var. My lord, you 'll pardon me a little freedom;
For I must boldly urge in such a cause—
Whoever flatters you, tho' ne'er so near
Related to your blood, should be suspected.

Theo. If friendship would admit a cold suspicion,
After what I have heard and seen to-day,
Of all mankind I should suspect Varanes.

Var. He has stung me to the heart; my groans will choke me,
Unless my struggling passion gets a vent.
Out with it then—I can no more dissemble—
Yes, yes, my lord! since you reduce me to
The last necessity I must confess it;
I must avow my flame for Athenais,
I am all fire, my passion eats me up,
It grows incorp'rate with my flesh and blood:

My pangs redouble; now they cleave my heart!
Oh, Athenais! oh, Eudosia!——Oh!——
" Tho' plain as day I see my own destruction,
" Yet to my death, and oh, let all the gods
" Bear witness! still I swear I will adore thee!"

Theo. Alas, Varanes! which of us two the heavens
Have mark'd for death is yet above the stars;
But while we live let us preserve our friendship
Sacred and just, as we have ever done.
This only mean in two such hard extremes
Remains for both: to-morrow you shall see her
With all advantage in her own apartment;
Take your own time; say all you can to gain her;
If you can win her, lead her into Persia;
If not, consent that I espouse her here.

Var. Still worse and worse! Oh, Theodosius! oh,
I cannot speak for sighs; my death is seal'd
By his last sweetness: had you been less good
I might have hop'd; but now my doom's at hand.
Go then and take her, take her to the temple;
The gods too give you joy! Oh, Athenais!
Why does thy image mock my foolish sorrow?
Oh, Theodosius! do not see my tears:
Away and leave me; leave me to the grave.

Theo. Farewell; let's leave the issue to the heavens;
I will prepare your way with all that honour
Can urge in your behalf, tho' to my ruin. [*Exit* Theo.

Var. Oh, I could tear my limbs and eat my flesh!
Fool that I was, fond, proud, vain-glorious fool!
Damn'd be all courts, and trebly damn'd ambition!

Blasted be thy remembrance! curses on thee!
And plagues on plagues fall on those fools that seek thee!

Aran. Have comfort, sir——

Var. Away and leave me villain!
Traitor, who wrought me first to my destruction!—
Yet stay and help, help me to curse my pride,
Help me to wish that I had ne'er been royal,
That I had never heard the name of Cyrus,
"That my first brawl in court had been my last."
Oh that I had been born some happy swain,
And never known a life so great, so vain!
Where I extremes might not be forc'd to choose,
And blest with some mean wife no crown could lose,
Where the dear partner of my little state,
With all her smiling offspring at the gate,
Blessing my labours might my coming wait;
Where in our humble beds all safe might lie,
And not in cursed court for glory die—— [*Exeunt.*

SONG.

"*Hail to the myrtle shade,*
"*All hail to the nymphs of the fields;*
"*Kings would not here invade*
"*Those pleasures that virtue yields.*

"Chor. *Beauty here opens her arms,*
"*To soften the languishing mind,*
"*And Phillis unlocks her charms:*
"*Ah, Phillis! why so kind?*

" *Phillis, thou soul of love,*
" *Thou joy of the neigh'bring swains;*
" *Phillis that crowns the grove,*
" *And Phillis that gilds the plains:*

" Chor. *Phillis, that ne'er had the skill*
" *To paint, and to patch, and be fine;*
" *Yet Phillis whose eyes can kill,*
" *Whom nature hath made divine:*

" *Phillis, whose charming song*
" *Makes labour and pains a delight:*
" *Phillis, that makes the day young,*
" *And shortens the live-long night:*

" Chor. *Phillis, whose lips like May,*
" *Still laughs at the sweets they bring,*
" *Where love never knows decay,*
" *But sets with eternal spring.*"

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter MARCIAN *and* LUCIUS, *at a distance.*

Marcian.

THE general of the Oriental armies
Was a commission large as fate could give:
'Tis gone. Why, what care I? Oh, Fortune!
Fortune!
" Thou laughing empress of this busy world,

"Marcian defies thee now"———
Why what a thing is a discarded favourite!
"He who but now, tho' longing to retire,
"Could not for busy waiters be alone,
"Throng'd in his chamber, haunted to his closet
"With a full crowd and an eternal court!"
When once the favour of his prince is turn'd,
Shun'd as a ghost the clouded man appears,
And all the gaudy worshippers forsake him.
"So fares it now with me; where'er I come,
"As if I were another Catiline;
"The Courtiers rise, and no man will sit near me:
"As if the plague were on me all men fly me."
Oh, Lucius! Lucius! if thou leav'st me too
I think, I think, I could not bear it,
But like a slave my spirit, broke with suff'ring,
Should on these coward knees fall down, and beg
Once to be great again———

Luc. Forbid it, Heaven!
That e'er the noble Marcian condescend
To ask of any but th' immortal gods!
Nay, I vow, if yet your spirit dare,
Spite of the court you shall be great as Cæsar.

"*Mar.* No, Lucius, no; the gods repel that humour.
"Yet since we are alone, and must ere long
"Leave this bad court, let us like veterans
"Speak out—Thou say'st, alas! as great as Cæsar;
"But where's his greatness? where is his ambition?
"If any sparks of virtue yet remain
"In this poor figure of the Roman glory;

" I say if any be, how dim they shine
" Compar'd with what his great forefathers were!
" How should he lighten then or awe the world
" Whose soul in courts is but a lambent fire?
" And scarce, oh Rome! a glowworm in the field,
" Soft, young, religious—godlike qualities!
" For one that should recover the lost empire,
" And wade thro' seas of blood and walk o'er mountains
" Of slaughter'd bodies to immortal honour."

Luc. Poor heart! he pin'd a while ago for love—

Mar. And for his mistress vow'd to leave the world;
But some new chance it seems has chang'd his mind.
A marriage! but to whom, or whence she came,
None knows; but yet a marriage is proclaim'd,
Pageants prepar'd, the arches are adorn'd,
" The statues crown'd, the Hippodrome does groan
" Beneath the burden of the mounted warriors:"
The theatre is open'd too, where he
And the hot Persian mean to act their follies.
Gods! gods! is this the image of our Cæsars?
Is this the model of our Romulus?
Oh why so poorly have you stamp'd Rome's glory!
" Not Rome's but your's—Is this man fit to bear it,
" This waxen portraiture of majesty,
" Which ev'ry warmer passion does melt down,
" And makes him fonder than a woman's longing?"

Luc. Thus much I know to the eternal shame
Of the imperial blood; this upstart empress,
This fine new queen, is sprung from abject parents,

Nay, basely born: but that's all one to him;
He likes and loves, and therefore marries her.
Mar. Shall I not speak, shall I not tell him of it?
I feel this big-swol'n throbbing Roman spirit
Will burst unless I utter what I ought.

Enter PULCHERIA *with a Paper in her hand, and* JULIA.

Mar. Pulcheria here! why she's the scourge of Marcian;
I tremble too whenever she approaches,
" And my heart dances an unusual measure:
" Spite of myself I blush, and cannot stir
" While she is here"—What, Lucius, can this mean?
" 'Tis said Calphurnia had the heart of Cæsar,
" Augustus doted on the subtile Livia,
" Why then should not I worship that fair angel?
" Oh! didst thou mark her when her fury lighten'd?
" She seem'd all goddess, nay, her frowns became her:
" There was a beauty in her very wildness.
" Were I a man born great as our first founder,
" Sprung from the blood divine—but I am cast
" Beyond all possibility of hope"
Pulch. Come hither Marcian, read this paper o'er,
And mark the strange neglect of Theodosius:
He signs whate'er I bring; perhaps you 'ave heard
To-morrow he intends to wed a maid of Athens,
New-made a Christian, and new-nam'd Eudosia,
Whom he more dearly prizes than his empire;
Yet in this paper he hath set his hand,
And seal'd it too with the imperial signet,
That she shall lose her head to-morrow morning.

Mar. 'Tis not for me to judge; yet this seems strange.

Pulch. I know he rather would commit a murder
On his own person than permit a vein
Of her to bleed; yet, Marcian, what might follow
If I were envious of this virgin's honour
By his rash passing whatsoe'er I offer——
Without a view—Ha! but I had forgot:
Julia, let's haste from this infectious person——
I had forgot that Marcian was a traitor:
" Yet by the powers divine I swear, 'tis pity
" That one so form'd by nature for all honour,
" All titles, greatness, dignities imperial,
" The noblest person, and the bravest courage,
" Should not be honest. Julia, is 't not pity!".
Oh, Marcian! Marcian! I could weep to think
Virtue should lose itself as thine has done.
Repent, rash man! if yet 't is not too late,
And mend thy errors; so farewell for ever.

[*Exeunt* Pulch. *and* Julia.

Mar. Farewell for ever! no, madam, ere I go
I am resolv'd to speak, and you shall hear me;
Then if you please take off this traitor's head:
End my commission and my life together.

Luc. Perhaps you 'll doubt of what I 'm going to say:
But by your life my lord I think 't is true;
Pulcheria loves this traitor: " Did you mark her?
" At first she had forgot your banishment;
" Makes you her counsellor, and tells her secrets?
" As to a friend; nay, leaves them in your hand,

" And says 't is pity that you are not honest,
" With such description of your gallantry
" As none but love could make; then taking leave,
" Thro' the dark lashes of her darting eyes
" Methought she shot her soul at ev'ry glance,
" Still looking back, as if she had a mind
" That you should know she left her heart behind her."

Mar. Alas! thou dost not know her, nor do I,
Nor can the wit of all mankind conceive her.
But let 's away. This paper is of use.

Luc. I guess your purpose:
He is a boy, and as a boy you 'll use him—
There is no other way.

Mar. Yes, if he be not
Quite dead with sleep, for ever lost to honour,
Marcian with this shall rouse him. Oh, my Lucius!
Methinks the ghosts of the great Theodosius
And thund'ring Constantine appear before me;
They charge me as a soldier to chastise him,
To lash him with keen words from lazy love,
And show him how they trod the paths of honour. [*Ex.*

SCENE II.

THEODOSIUS *lying on a Couch, with two Boys dress like Cupids singing to him as he sleeps*

SONG.

" *Happy day! ah, happy day*
" *That Cæsar's beams did first display*

" *So peaceful was the happy day,*
" *The gods themselves did all look down*
" *The royal infant's birth to crown,*
" *So pleas'd they scarce did on the guilty frown.*
" *Happy day! ah, happy day!*
" *And oh, thrice happy hour!*
" *That made such goodness master of such power;*
" *For thus the gods declare to men,*
" *No day like this shall ever come again.*"

Enter MARCIAN *with an Order.*

" *Theo.* Ha! what rash thing art thou who set's so small
" A value on thy life thus to presume
" Against the fatal orders I have given,
" Thus to entrench on Cæsar's solitude,
" And urge me to thy ruin?
" *Mar.* Mighty Cæsar!
" I have transgress'd, and for my pardon bow
" To thee as to the gods when I offend;
" Nor can I doubt your mercy, when you know
" The nature of my crime. I am commission'd
" From all the earth to give thee thanks and praises,
" Thou darling of mankind! whose conqu'ring arms
" Already drown the glory of great Julius,
" Whose deeper reach in laws and policy
" Makes wise Augustus envy thee in heaven.
" What mean the fates by such prodigious virtue?
" When scarce the manly down yet shades thy face,
" With conquest thus to over-run the world,

" And make barbarians tremble? Oh, ye gods!
" Should destiny now end thee in thy bloom;
" Methinks I see thee mourn'd above the loss
" Of lov'd Germanicus, thy funerals,
" Like his, are solemniz'd with tears and blood.
" *Theo.* How, Marcian!
" *Mar.* Yes, the raging multitude,
" Like torrents, set no bound to their mad grief,
" Shave their wives' heads, and tear off their own hair;
" With wild despair they bring their infants out
" To brawl their parent's sorrow in the streets:
" Trade is no more, all courts of justice stopp'd;
" With stones they dash the windows of their temples,
" Pull down their altars, break their household gods,
" And still the universal groan is this,
" Constantinople's lost, our empire's ruin'd:
" Since he is gone, that father of his country,
" Since he is dead, oh, life! where is thy pleasure?
" Oh, Rome! oh, conquer'd world! where is thy glory?
" *Theo.* I know thee well, thy custom and thy manners;
" Thou dost upbraid me; but no more of this,
" Not for thy life——
" *Mar.* What 's life without my honour?
" Could you transform yourself into a Gorgon,
" Or make that beardless face like Jupiter's,
" I would be heard in spite of all your thunder.
" Oh, power of guilt! you fear to stand the test,
" Which virtue brings; like sores your vices shake
" Before this Roman healer: but, by the gods,

" Before I go I'll rip the malady,
" And let the venom flow before your eyes:
" This is a debt to the great Theodosius,
" The granfather of your illustrious blood,
" And then farewell for ever.
" *Theo.* Presuming Marcian!
" What canst thou urge against my innocence?
" Thro' the whole course of all my harmless youth,
" Ev'n to this hour, I cannot call to mind
" One wicked act which I have done to shame me.
" *Mar.* This may be true; yet if you give the sway
" To other hands, and your poor subjects suffer,
" Your negligence to them is as the cause.
" Oh, Theodosius! credit me who knows
" The world, and hear our soldiers censure kings.
" In aftertimes, if thus you should go on,
" Your memory by warriors will be scorn'd,
" As Nero or as Caligula loath'd;
" They will despise your sloth and backward ease
" More than they hate the others' cruelty.
" And what a thing, ye gods, is scorn or pity!
" Heap on me, Heaven, the hate of all mankind,
" Load me with malice, envy, detestation,
" Let me be horrid to all apprehension,
" And the world shun me, so I 'scape but scorn.
" *Theo.* Pr'y thee no more.
" *Mar.* Nay, when the legions make comparisons,
" And say thus Otho, Nero once resolv'd
" On Galba's insurrection for revenge,
" To give all France as plunder to the arms,

" To poison the whole senate at a feast,
" To burn the city, turn the wild beasts out,
" Bears, lions, tigers, on the multitude,
" That so obstructing those that quench'd the fire
" He might at once destroy rebellious Rome.
" *Theo.* Oh, cruelty! why tell'st thou me of this?
" Am I of such a bloody, barb'rous temper?
" *Mar.* Yet some will say this show'd he had a spirit,
" However fierce, avenging, and pernicious—
" That favour'd of a Roman: but for you,
" What can your partial sycophants invent,
" To make you room among the emperors,
" Whose utmost is the smallest part of Nero,
" A petty player—one who can act the hero,
" And never be one. Oh, ye immortal gods!
" Is this the old Cæsarian majesty?
" Now in the name of our great Romulus
" Why sing you not and fiddle too as he did?
" Why have ye not, like Nero, a phenascus,
" One to take care of your celestial voice:
" Lie on your back, my lord, and on your stomach
" Lay a thin plate of lead—abstain from fruits;
" And when the business of the stage is done
" Retire with your loose friends to costly banquets;
" While the lean army groans upon the ground.
" *Theo.* Leave me, I say, lest I chastise thee:
" Hence, begone, I say——.
" *Mar.* Not 'till you have heard me out——
" Build too, like him, a palace lin'd with gold,
" As long and large as that to the Esquiline:

" Enclose a pool too in it like the sea,
" And at the empire's cost let navies meet;
" Adorn your starry chambers too with gems;
" Contrive the plated ceilings to turn round,
" With pipes to cast ambrosian oils upon you;
" Consume with this prodigious vanity
" In mere perfumes and odorous distillations
" Of sesterces at once four hundred millions;
" Let naked virgins wait you at your table,
" And wanton Cupids dance and clap their wings;
" No matter what becomes of the poor soldiers,
" So they perform the drudgery they are fit for;
" Why, let 'em starve for want of their arrears,
" Drop as they go, and lie, like dogs, in ditches.
" *Theo.* Come, you are a traitor——
" *Mar.* Go to, you are a boy—
" Or by the gods—
" *Theo.* If arrogance like this,
" And to the emperor's face, should'scape unpunish'd
" I'll write myself a coward—Die then a villain,
" A death too glorious for so bad a man,
" By Theodosius' hand.

[*Marcian disarms him, but is wounded.*

" *Mar.* Now, sir, where are you?
" What in the name of all our Roman spirits
" Now charms my hand from giving thee thy fate?
" Has he not cut me off from all my honours—
" Torn my commissions, sham'd me to the earth,
" Banish'd the court, a vagabond for ever.
" Do not the soldiers hourly ask it from me,

" Sigh their own wrongs, and beg me to revenge 'em?
" What hinders now but that I mount the throne
" And make to that this purple youth my footstool:
" The armies court me and my country's cause;
" The injuries of Rome and Greece persuade me.
" Shew but this Roman blood which he has drawn,
" They 'll make me emperor whether I will or no.
" Did not for less than this the latter Brutus,
" Because he thought Rome wrong'd, in person head
" Against his friend a black conspiracy,
" And stab the majesty of all the world?
" *Theo.* Act as you please, I am within your power.
" *Mar.* Did not the former Brutus for the crime
" Of Sextus, drive old Tarquin from his kingdom?
" And shall this prince too, by permitting others
" To act their wicked will and lawless pleasures,
" Ravish from the empire it's dear health,
" Well-being, happiness, and ancient glory,
" Go on in this dishonourable rest?
" Shall he, I say, dream on while the starv'd troops
" Lie cold and waking in the wintercamp;
" And like pin'd birds for want of sustenance
" Feed on the haws and berries of the field?
" Oh, temper, temper me, ye gracious gods!
" Give to my hand forbearance, to my heart
" It's constant loyalty—I would but shake him,
" Rouse him a little from this death of honour,
" And show him what he should be. [*Aside.*
" *Theo.* You accuse me
" As if I were some monster most unheard of,

" First as the ruin of the army, then
" Of taking your commission; but, by heaven
" I swear, oh, Marcian! this I never did,
" Nor e'er intended it; nor say I this
" To alter thy stern usage; for with what
" Thou 'st said or done, and brought to my remembrance,
" I grow already weary of my life.
" *Mar.* My lord, I take your word—You do not know
" The wounds which rage within your country's bowels,
" The horrid usage of the suff'ring soldier;
" But why will not our Theodosius know?
" If you entrust the government to others
" That act these crimes who but yourself 's to blame?
" Be witnesses, ye gods! of my plain dealing,
" Of Marcian's honesty, howe'er degraded.
" I thank you for my banishment; but, alas!
" My loss is little to what soon will follow;
" Reflect but on yourself and your own joys;
" Let not this lethargy for ever hold you.
" 'T was rumour'd thro' the city that you lov'd,
" That your espousals should be solemniz'd;
" When on a sudden here you send your orders
" That this bright favourite, the lov'd Eudosia;
" Should lose her head.
" *Theo.* Oh, heaven and earth! what say'st thou?
" That I have seal'd the death of my Eudosia?
" *Mar.* 'T is your own hand and signet: yet I swear,
" Tho' you have given to female hands the sway,

" And therefore I as well as the whole army
" For ever ought to curse all womankind;
" Yet when the virgin came, as she was doom'd,
" And on the scaffold, for that purpose rais'd,
" Without the walls appear'd before the army——
" *Theo.* What! on a scaffold? Ha! before the army?
" *Mar.* How quickly was the tide of fury turn'd
" To soft compassion and relenting tears! but when the axe
" Sever'd the brightest beauty of the earth
" From that fair body; had you heard the groan,
" Which like a peal of distant thunder ran
" Thro' all the arm'd host, you would have thought,
" By the immediate darkness that fell round us,
" Whole nature was concern'd at such a suffering,
" And all the gods were angry.
" *Theo.* Oh, Pulcheria!
" Cruel, ambitious sister, this must be
" Thy doing! Oh, support me, noble Marcian!
" Now, now's the time, if thou dar'st strike: behold
" I offer thee my breast; with my last breath
" I'll thank thee too if now thou draw'st my blood.
" Were I to live, thy counsel should direct me;
" But 'tis too late—— [*He swoons.*
" *Mar.* He faints! What, hoa there, Lucius!

Enter LUCIUS.

" My lord the emperor, Eudosia lives!
" She's here, or will be in a minute—monent;

" Quick as a thought she calls you to the temple.
" Oh, Lucius! help——I 'ave gone too far—But see,
" He breathes again—Eudosia has awak'd him.
" *Theo.* Did you not name Eudosia?
" *Mar.* Yes, she lives;
" I did but feign the story of her death
" To find how near you plac'd her to your heart!
" And may the gods rain all their plagues upon me
" If ever I rebuke you thus again:
" Yet 't is most certain that you sign'd her death,
" Not knowing what the wise Pulcheria offer'd,
" Who left it in my hand to startle you;
" But by my life and fame I did not think
" It would have touch'd your life. Oh, pardon me,
" Dear prince! my lord, my emperor, royal master!
" Droop not because I utter'd some rash words,
" And was a madman—By th' immortal gods
" I love you as my soul: whate'er I said
" My thoughts were otherwise; believe these tears,
" Which do not use to flow, all shall be well;
" I swear that there are seeds in that sweet temper
" T' atone for all the crimes in this bad age.
" *Theo.* I thank thee—first for my Eudosia's life:
" What but my love could have call'd back that life
" Which thou hast made me hate? And oh, methought
" 'T was hard, dear Marcian! very hard from thee
" From him I ever rev'renc'd as my father,
" To hear so harsh a message—But no more;

" We 're friends—thy hand—Nay, if thou wilt not rise
" And let me fold my arms about thy neck,
" I'll not believe thy love—In this forgive me:
" First let me wed Eudosia and we 'll out;
" We will, my general, and make amends
" For all that 's past—Glory and arms ye call!
" And Marcian leads me on—
" *Mar.* Let her not rest then—
" Espouse her straight; I 'll strike you at a heat:
" May this great humour get large growth within you,
" And be encourag'd by th' embold'ning gods.
" Oh what a sight will this be to the soldier,
" To see me bring you dress'd in shining armour.
" To head the shouting squadrons!—Oh, ye gods
" Methinks I hear the echoing cries of joy,
" The sound of trumpets and the beat of drums—
" I see each starving soldier bound from earth,
" As if some god by miracle had rais'd him,
" And with beholding you grow fat again.
" Nothing but gazing eyes and op'ning mouths,
" Cheeks red with joy and lifted hands about you;
" Some wiping the glad tear that trickle down
" With broken Ios, and with sobbing raptures
" Crying, to arms, he 's come, our emperor's come
" To win the world—Why, is not this better
" Than lolling in a lady's lap, and sleeping,
" Fasting or praying? Come, come, you shall be merry;
" And for Eudosia she is your's already
" Marcian has said it, sir; she shall be your's,

" *Theo.* Oh, Marcian; oh, my brother, father, all!
" Thou best of friends, most faithful counsellor
" I'll find a match for thee too ere I rest,
" To make thee love me; for when thou art with me
" I'm strong and well, but when thou'rt gone I'm nothing.

Enter ATHENAIS *meeting* THEODOSIUS.

Theo. Alas, Eudosia! tell me what to say;
For my full heart can scarce bring forth a word
Of that which I have sworn to see perform'd.
Athen. I'm perfectly obedient to your pleasure.
Theo. Well then, I come to tell thee that Varanes
Of all mankind is nearest to my heart:
I love him, dear Eudosia! and to prove
That love on trial all my blood 's too little:
Ev'n thee, if I were sure to die this moment,
(As Heaven alone can tell how far my fate
Is off) oh! thou my soul's most tender joy,
With my last breath I would bequeath him thee.
Athen. Then you are pleas'd, my lord, to yield me to him.
Theo. No, my Eudosia, no; I will not yield thee.
While I have life; for worlds I will not yield thee:
Yet thus far I 'm engag'd to let thee know
He loves thee, Athenais, more than ever;
He languishes, despairs, and dies, like me,
And I have past'd down word that he shall see thee.
Theo. Ah, sir! what have you done against yourself
And me!——

" Why will you trust me, who am now afraid
" To trust myself?—why do you leave me naked
" To an assault, who had made proof my virtue
" With this sure guard never to see him more?"
For oh! with trembling agonies I speak it,
I cannot see a prince whom once I lov'd
Bath'd in his grief, and gasping at my feet
" In all the violent trances of despair,"
Without a sorrow that perhaps may end me.

Theo. Oh, ye severer powers! too cruel fate!
Did ever love tread such a maze before?
Yet, Athenais, still I trust thy virtue;
But if thy bleeding heart cannot refrain,
Give, give thyself away; yet still remember
That moment Theodosius is no more———

[*Exit* Theo.

Athen. Now glory, now, if ever thou did'st work
In woman's mind assist me—" Oh, my heart!
" Why dost thou throb as if thou wert a breaking?
" Down, down, I say; think on thy injuries,
" Thy wrongs, thy wrongs—'T is well my eyes are dry,
" And all within my bosom now is still."

Enter VARANES *leaning on* ARANTHES.

Ha! is this he! or is't Varanes' ghost?
He looks as if he had bespoke his grave,
Trembling and pale. I must not dare to view him;
For oh! I feel his melancholy here,
And fear I shall too soon partake his sickness.

Var. Thus to the angry gods offending mortals,

Made sensible by some severe affliction
How all their crimes are register'd in Heaven,
" In that nice court where no rash words escapes,
" But ev'n extravagant thoughts are all set down;"
Thus the poor penitents with fear approach
The rev'rend shrines, and thus for mercy bow; [*Kneels.*
Thus melting too they wash the hallow'd earth,
And groan to be forgiven——
Oh empress! oh Eudosia! such you 're now:
These are your titles, and I must not dare
Ever to call thee Athenais more.

Athen. Rise, rise, my lord, let me entreat you rise;
I will not hear you in that humble posture;
Rise, or I must withdraw——The world will blush
For you and me, should it behold a prince
Sprung from immortal Cyrus on his knees
Before the daughter of a poor philosopher.

Var. 'T is just, ye righteous gods! my doom is just;
Nor will I strive to deprecate her anger.
If possible I 'll aggravate my crimes,
That she may rage till she has broke my heart;
'Tis all I now desire—" and let the gods,
" Those cruel gods that join to my undoing,
" Be witnesses, to this unnatural wish,"
Is to fall dead without a groan before her.

Athen. Oh, ye known sounds! but I must steel my soul. [*Aside.*
" Methinks these robes, my Delia, are too heavy."

Var. Not vouchsafe a word, a look, or one regard!

" Is then the nature of my fault so heinous ;
" That when I come to take my eternal leave
" You 'll not vouchsafe to view me ? This is scorn
" Which the fair soul of gentle Athenais
" Would ne'er have harbour'd——
" Oh ! for the sake of him whom you ere long
" Shall hold as fast as now your wishes form him,"
Give me a patient hearing ; for however
I talk of death, and seem to loathe my life,
I would deliberate with my fate a while,
With snatching glances eye thee to the last,
Pause o'er a loss like that of Athenais,
And parley with my ruin.

Athen. Speak, my lord ;
To hear you is the emperor's command !
And for that cause I readily obey.

Var. The emperor, the emperor's command !
And for that cause she readily obeys !
I thank you, madam, that on any terms
You condescend to hear me———
Know then, Eudosia, ah, rather let me call thee
By the lov'd name of Athenais still !
" That name which I so often have invok'd,
" And which was once auspicious to my vows,
" So oft at midnight sigh'd among the groves,
" The river's murmur, and the echo's burden,
" Which every bird could sing and wind did bear ;
" By that dear name I make this protestation,
" By all that 's good on earth or bless'd in Heaven,"
I swear I love thee more, far more, than ever ;

With conscious blushes too, here help me gods!
Help me to tell her, tho' to my confusion
And everlasting shame, yet I must tell her,
I lay the Persian crown before her feet.

Athen. My lord, I thank you, and to express those thanks
As nobly as you offer 'em I return
The gift you make; nor will I now upbraid you
With the example of the emperor;
Not but I know 't is that that draws you on
Thus to descend beneath your majesty
And swell the daughter of a poor philosopher
With hopes of being great.

Var. Ah, madam! ah! you wrong me: by the gods
I had repented ere I knew the emperor——

Athen. You find, perhaps too late, that Athenais,
However slighted for her birth and fortune;
Has something in her person and her virtue
Worth the regard of emperors themselves;
And to return the compliment you gave
My father, Leontine, that poor philosopher,
Whose utmost glory is to 'ave been your tutor,
I here protest, by virtue and by glory,
I swear by heaven and all the powers divine,
Th' abandon'd daughter of that poor old man
Shall ne'er be seated on the throne of Cyrus.

Var. Oh, death to all my hopes! what hast thou sworn

To turn me wild? Ah, cursed throne of Cyrus!
Would thou had'st been o'erturn'd and laid in dust,
His crown too thunderstruck, my father, all
The Persian race, like poor Darius ruin'd.
Blotted, and swept for ever from the world,
When first ambition blasted thy remembrance——
Athen. Oh, Heaven! I had forgot the base affront
Offer'd by this proud man; a wrong so great
It is remov'd beyond all hope of mercy:
He had design'd to bribe my father's virtue,
And by unlawful means——
Fly from my sight, lest I become a fury,
And break those rules of temp'rance I propos'd:
Fly, fly, Varanes! fly this sacred place,
Where virtue and religion are profess'd;
"This city will not harbour infidels,
"Traitors to chastity, licentious princes:
"Begone I say; thou canst not here be safe:"
Fly to imperial libertines abroad;
In foreign courts thou 'lt find a thousand beauties
That will comply for gold—for gold they 'll weep,
For gold be fond as Athenais was,
And charm thee still as if they lov'd indeed.
"Thou 'lt find enough companions too for riot,
"Luxuriant all, and royal as thyself;
"Tho' thy loud vices should resound to heaven.
"Art thou not gone yet?
Var. "No, I am charm'd to hear you.
"Oh! from my soul I do confess myself

" The very blot of honour—I am more black
" Than thou in all thy heat of just revenge,
" With all thy glorious eloquence can make me."

Athen. Away, Varanes!

Var. Yes, madam, I am going———
Nay, by the gods I do not ask thee pardon,
Nor while I live will I implore thy mercy;
But when I 'm dead, if as thou dost return
With happy Theodosius from the temple—
If as thou goest in triumph through the streets,
Thou chance to meet the cold Varanes there,
Borne by his friends to his eternal home,
Stop then, oh Athenais! and behold me;
Say as thou hang'st about the emp'ror's neck,
Alas! my lord! this sight is worth our pity.
If to those pitying words thou add a tear,
Or give one parting groan——if possible,
If the good gods will grant my soul the freedom;
I 'll leave my shroud, and wake from death to thank thee.

Athen. He shakes my resolution from the bottom;
My bleeding heart too speaks in his behalf,
And says my virtue has been too severe.

Var. Farewell, oh empress! no Athenais now;
I will not call thee by that tender name,
Since cold despair begins to freeze my bosom,
And all my pow'rs are now resolv'd on death.
" 'Tis said that from my youth I have been rash,
" Choleric and hot; but let the gods now judge
" By my last wish if ever patient man

" Did calmly bear so great a loss as mine?
Since 't is so doom'd by fate you must be wedded
For your own peace, when I am laid in earth,
Forget that e'er Varanes had a being;
Turn all your soul to Theodosius' bosom:
Continue, gods! their days, and make them long;
Lucina wait upon their fruitful Hymen,
And many children beauteous as the mother,
And pious as the father, make 'em smile.

Athen. Oh, Heav'ns!

Var. Farewell——I 'll trouble you no more;
The malady that 's lodg'd within grows stronger;
I feel the shock of my approaching fate;
My heart too trembles at his distant march;
Nor can I utter more if you should ask me.
Thy arm Aranthes—Oh, farewell for ever!——

Athen. Varanes, stay; and ere you go for ever
Let me unfold my heart.

Var. O Athenais!
What further cruelty hast thou in store
To add to what I suffer?

Athen. Since 't is doom'd
That we must part, let 's part as lovers should,
As those that have lov'd long and loved well.

Var. Art thou so good, oh! Athenais, oh!

Athen. First, from my soul I pity and forgive you;
I pardon you that hasty little error,
Which yet has been the cause of both our ruins:
And let this sorrow witness for my heart
How eagerly I wish it had not been.

And since I cannot keep it, take it all;
Take all the love, oh, prince! I ever bore you;
"Or if 't is possible I 'll give you more:
"Your noble carriage forces this confession,
"I rage, I burn, I bleed, I die, for love!
"I am distracted with this world of passion.
"*Var.* Gods! cruel gods! take notice I forgive you.
"*Athen.* Alas! my lord, my weaker tender sex
"Has not your manly patience, cannot curb
"This fury in; therefore I let it loose;
"Spite of my rigid duty I will speak
"With all the dearness of a dying lover."
Farewell, most lovely and most lov'd of men——
Why comes this dying paleness o'er thy face?
Why wander thus thy eyes? why dost thou bend,
As if the fatal weight of death were on thee?

Var. Speak yet a little more; for by the gods,
And as I prize those blessed happy moments,
I swear, oh Athenais! all is well:
Oh, never better!

Athen. I doubt thee, dear Varanes!
Yet if thou dy'st I shall not long be from thee.
Once more farewell, and take these last embraces.
Oh, I could crush him to my heart! Farewell;
And as a dying pledge of my last love,
Take this, which all thy prayers could never charm.
What have I done? Oh! lead me, lead me, Delia!
Ah, prince, farewell! angels protect and guard thee!

Var. Turn back, oh, Athenais! and behold me;
Hear my last words, and then farewell for ever!

Thou hast undone me more by this confession:
You say, you swear, you love me more than ever;
Yet I must see you married to another:
Can there be any plague or hell like this!
Oh Athenais! whither shall I turn me?
You 'ave brought me back to life; but oh! what life?
To a life more terrible than thousand deaths.
Like one that had been bury'd in a trance
With racking starts he wakes, and gazes round,
Forc'd by despair his whirling limbs to wound,
"And bellow like a spirit under ground,"
Still urg'd by fate to turn, to toss and rave,
Tormented, dash'd, and broken, in the grave.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

ATHENAIS *dress'd in Imperial Robes, and crown'd; Table with a Bowl of Poison,* DELIA *attending.*

Athenais.

A MIDNIGHT marriage! Must I to the temple
Thus at the murd'rer's hour? 'Tis wondrous strange!
But so, thou say'st, my father has commanded,
And that 's a mighty reason.

Delia. The emp'ror, in compassion to the prince,
Who would perhaps fly to extravagance
If he in public should resolve to espouse you,
Contriv'd by this close marriage to deceive him.

Athen. 'Tis well; retire.
" Go fetch thy lute, and sing those lines I gave thee."
[*Exit* Delia.
So, now I am alone; yet my soul shakes;
For where this dreadful draught may carry me
The Heavens can only tell; yet I 'm resolved
To drink it off in spite of consequence.
Whisper him, oh, some angel! what I 'm doing:
By sympathy of soul let him too tremble
To hear my wondrous faith, my wondrous love,
" Whose spirit not content with an ovation
" Of ling'ring fate, with triumph thus resolv'd,
" Thus in the rapid chariot of the soul,
" To mount and dare as never woman dar'd. [*Drinks.*
" 'Tis done—haste, Delia, haste—come, bring thy lute,
" And sing my waftage to immortal joys.
" Methinks I can't but smile at my own bravery:
" Thus from my lowest fortune rais'd to empire,
" Crown'd and adorn'd, worshipp'd by half the earth,
" While a young monarch dies for my embraces,
" Yet now to wave the glories of the world"—
Oh, my Varanes! tho' my birth 's unequal,
My virtue sure has richly recompens'd,
And quite outgone example!

SONG.

" *Ah, cruel bloody fair!*
" *What can'st thou now do more?*

" *Alas! 't is all too late*
" *Philander to restore!*
" *Why should the heavenly powers persuade*
" *Poor mortals to believe*
" *That they guard us here*
" *And reward us there,*
" *Yet all our joys deceive?*

" *Her poignard then she took*
" *And held it in her hand,*
" *And with a dying look*
" *Cry'd, thus I fate command:*
" *Philander, ah, my love! I come*
" *To meet thy shade below:*
" *Ah, I come! she cry'd,*
" *With a wound so wide*
" *There needs no second blow.*

" *In purple waves her blood*
" *Ran streaming down the floor,*
" *Unmov'd she saw the flood,*
" *And bless'd her dying hour:*
" *Philander! ah Philander! still*
" *The bleeding Phillis cry'd;*
" *She wept a while*
" *And she forc'd a smile,*
" *Then clos'd her eyes and dy'd.*"

Enter PULCHERIA.

Pulch. How fares my dear Eudosia? Ha! thou look'st,

Or else the tapers cheat my sight, like one
That 's fitter for thy tomb than Cæsar's bed:
A fatal sorrow dims thy shaded eyes,
And in despite of all thy ornaments
Thou seem'st to me the ghost of Athenais.

Athen. And what 's the punishment, my dear Pulcheria!
What torments are allotted those sad spirits
Who groaning with the burden of despair
No longer will endure the cares of life,
But boldly set themselves at liberty,
" Thro' the dark caves of death to wander on,
" Like 'wilder'd travellers without a guide,
" Eternal rovers in the gloomy maze,
" Where scarce the twilight of an infant moon,
" By a faint glimmer check'ring thro' the trees,
" Reflects to dismal view the walking ghosts,
" And never hope to reach the blessed fields?"

Pulch. No more o' that; Atticus shall resolve thee:
But see, he waits thee from the emperor;
Thy father too attends.

Enter LEONTINE, ATTICUS, *&c.*

Leon. Come, Athenais—Ha! what now, in tears?
Oh, fall of honour! but nō more, I charge thee,
I charge thee, as thou ever hop'st my blessing
Or fear'st my curse, to banish from thy soul
All thoughts, if possible the memory,
Of that ungrateful prince that has undone thee.
Attend me to the temple on this instant

To make the emp'ror thine, this night to wed him,
" And lie within his arms."

Athen. Yes, sir, I 'll go——
Let me but dry my eyes and I will go;
Eudosia, this unhappy bride, shall go:
Thus like a victim crown'd and doom'd to bleed,
I 'll wait you to the altar, wed the emp'ror,
" And if he pleases lie within his arms."

Leon. Thou art my child again.

Athen. But do not, sir, imagine any charms
Or threat'nings shall compel me
Never to think of poor Varanes more:
No, my Varanes! no——
While I have breath I will remember thee;
To thee alone I will my thoughts confine,
And all my meditations shall be thine:
" The image of my woes my soul shall fill,
" Fate and my end, and thy remembrance still.
As in some popular shade the nightingale
" With piercing moans does her lost young bewail,
" Which the rough hind observing as they lay
" Warm in their downy nest had stol'n away;
" But she in mournful sounds does still complain,
" Sings all the night, tho' all her songs are vain,
" And still renews her miserable strain."
Yes, my Varanes! till my death comes on
Shall sad Eudosia thy dear loss bemoan. [*Exeunt.*

Enter VARANES.

Var. 'Tis night, dead night, and weary nature lies

So fast as if she never were to rise;
No breath of wind now whispers thro' the trees,
No noise at land nor murmur in the seas;
" Lean wolves forget to howl at night's pale noon,
" No wakeful dogs bark at the silent moon,
" Nor bay the ghosts that glide with horror by
" To view the caverns where their bodies lie;
" The ravens perch and no presages give,
" Nor to the windows of the dying cleave;
" The owls forget to scream; no midnight sound
" Calls drowsy Echo from the hollow ground;
" In vaults the walking fires extinguish'd lie,
" The stars, heaven's sentry, wink, and seem to die:"
Such universal silence spreads below,
Thro' the vast shades where I am doom'd to go,
Nor shall I need a violence to wound,
The storm is here that drives me on the ground;
Sure means to make the soul and body part,
A burning fever and a broken heart.
What, hoa, Aranthes!

Enter ARANTHES.

I sent thee to th' apartment of Athenais——
" I sent thee," did I not, " to be admitted?"

Aran. You did, my lord; but oh!
I fear to give you an account.

Mar. Alas,
Aranthes! I am got on t' other side
Of this bad world, and now am past all fear.
Oh, ye avenging gods! is there a plague

Among your hoarded bolts and heaps of vengeance
Beyond the mighty loss of Athenais?
'Tis contradiction—Speak then, speak Aranthes,
For all misfortune, if compar'd with that,
Will make Varanes smile——

Aran. My lord, the Empress
Crown'd and adorn'd with the imperial robes,
At this dead time of night, with silent pomp,
As they design'd from all to keep it secret,
But chiefly sure from you; I say, the empress
Is now conducted by the general,
Atticus, and her father, to the temple,
There to espouse the Emperor Theodosius.

Var. Say'st thou? Is't certain? Ha!

Aran. Most certain, sir. I saw them in procession.

Var. Give me thy sword. Malicious Fate! Oh Fortune!
Oh giddy Chance! Oh turn of love and greatness!
Marry'd—she has kept her promise now indeed;
And oh! her pointed fame and nice revenge
Have reach'd their end. No, my Aranthes, no;
I will not stay the lazy execution
Of a slow fever. Give me thy hand, and swear
By all the love and duty that thou ow'st me,
T' observe the last commands that I shall give thee:
Stir not against my purpose, as thou fear'st
My anger and disdain; nor dare t' oppose me
With troublesome unnecessary formal reasons,
For what my thought has doom'd my hand shall seal.
I charge thee hold it stedfast to my heart,

Fix'd as the fate that throws me on the point.
Tho' I have liv'd a Persian, I will fall
As fair, as fearless, and as full resolv'd,
As any Greek or Roman of them all.

Aran. What you command is terrible, but sacred;
And to atone for this too cruel duty,
My lord, I' ll follow you——

Var. I charge thee not;
But when I am dead, take the attending slaves,
And bear me with my blood distilling down
Straight to the temple: lay me, oh, Aranthes!
Lay my cold corse at Athenais' feet,
And say, oh why! why do my eyes run o'er?
Say with my latest gasp I groan'd for pardon.
Just here, my friend; hold fast, and fix the sword;
I feel the art'ry where the lifeblood lies;
It heaves against the point—Now, oh ye gods!
If for the greatly wretched you have room
Prepare my place; for dauntless lo I come:
The force of love thus makes the mortal wound,
And Athenais sends me to the ground. [*Kills himself.*

SCENE III.

The outward Part of the Temple. *Enter* PULCHERIA *and* JULIA *at one Door,* MARCIAN *and* LUCIUS *at another.*

"*Pulch.* Look, Julia, see the pensive Marcian comes:
"'Tis to my wish; I must no longer lose him,

" Lest he should leave the court indeed. He looks
" As if some mighty secret work'd within him
" And labour'd for a vent—Inspire me, woman!
" That what my soul desires above the world
" May seem impos'd and forc'd on my affections.
" *Luc.* I say she loves you, and she stays to hear it
" From your own mouth—Now, in the name
" Of all the gods, at once, my lord, why are you silent?
" Take heed, sir, mark your opportunity,
" For if the woman lays it, in your way
" And you o'ersee it she is lost for ever.
" *Mar.* Madam, I come to take my eternal leave;
" Your doom has banish'd me, and I obey.
" The court and I shake hands, and now we part,
" Never to see each other more; the court
" Where I was born and bred a gentleman,
" No more, till your illustrious bounty rais'd me,
" And drew the earthborn vapour to the clouds:
" But as the gods ordain'd it I have lost,
" I know not how, thro' ignorance, your grace;
" And now the exhalation of my glory
" Is quite consum'd and vanish'd into air.
" *Pulch.* Proceed, sir.
" *Mar.* Yet let those gods that doom'd me to displease you
" Be witnesses how much I honour you——
" Thus worshipping, I swear by your bright self,
" I leave this infamous court with more content
" Than fools and flatt'rers seek it; but, oh Heaven!
" I cannot go if still your hate pursues me!

" Yes, I declare it is impossible
" To go to banishment without your pardon.
" *Pulch.* You have it, Marcian: is there ought beside
" That you would speak, for I am free to hear.
" *Mar.* Since I shall never see you more, what hinders
" But my last words should here protest the truth:
" Know then, imperial princess, matchless woman!
" Since first you cast your eyes upon my meanness,
" Ev'n, till you rais'd me to my envi'd height,
" I have in secret lov'd you—
" *Pulch.* Is this Marcian!
" *Mar.* You frown, but I am still prepar'd for all:
" I say I lov'd you, and I love you still,
" More than my life, and equal to my glory.
" Methinks the warring spirit that inspires
" This frame, the very genius of old Rome,
" That makes me talk without the fear of death,
" And drives my daring soul to acts of honour,
" Flames in your eyes; our thoughts too are akin
" Ambitious, fierce, and burn alike for glory.
" Now, by the gods, I lov'd you in your fury
" In all the thunder that quite riv'd my hopes;
" I lov'd you most ev'n when you did destroy me.
" Madam, I 've spoke my heart, and could say more,
" But that I see it grieves you; your high blood
" Frets at the arrogance and saucy pride
" Of this bold vagabond—May the gods forgive me—
" Farewell—a worthier general may succeed me,
" But none more faithful to the emperor's interest
" Than him you 're pleas'd to call the traitor Marcian.

" *Pulch.* Come back; you've subtily play'd your
part indeed;
" For first, the emperor, whom you lately school'd,
" Restores you your commission; next commands you,
" As you're a subject, not to leave the court:
" Next, but, oh Heaven! which way shall I express
" His cruel pleasure! he that is so mild
" In all things else, yet obstinate in this,
" Spite of my tears, my birth, and my disdain,
" Commands me, as I dread his high displeasure,
" Oh, Marcian! to receive you as my husband.
" *Mar.* Ha, Lucius! what does my fate intend?
" *Luc.* Pursue her, sir; 'tis as I said: she yields,
" And rages that you follow her no faster.
" *Pulch.* Is then, at last, my great authority
" And my intrusted power declin'd to this?
" Yet, oh my fate! what way can I avoid it?
" He charg'd me straight to wait him to the temple,
" And there resolve, oh, Marcian! on this marriage
" Now, gen'rous soldier, as you're truly noble,
" Oh, help me forth, lost in this labyrinth;
" Help me to loose this more than Gordian knot,
" And make me and yourself for ever happy.
" *Mar.* Madam, I'll speak as briefly as I can,
" And as a soldier ought: the only way
" To help this knot is yet to tie it faster.
" Since then the emperor has resolv'd you mine,
" For which I will for ever thank the gods,
" And make this holiday throughout my life,
" I take him at his word, and claim his promise;

" The empire of the world shall not redeem you.
" Nay, weep not, madam; tho' my outside's rough,
" Yet by those eyes your soldier has a heart
" Compassionate and tender as a virgin's;
" Ev'n now it bleeds to see those falling sorrows;
" Perhaps this grief may move the emperor.
" To a repentance: come then to the trial,
" For by my arms, my life, and dearer honour,
" If you go back when given me by his hand,
" In distant wars my fate I will deplore,
" And Marcian's name shall ne'er be heard of more."

SCENE IV.

The Temple. THEODOSIUS, ATHENAIS—ATTIC *joining their hands*—MARCIAN, PULCHERIA, LUCIUS, JULIA, DELIA, *&c.* LEONTINE.

Attic. *The more than Gordian knot is ty'd,*
Which Death's strong arm shall ne'er divide,
For when to bliss ye wafted are,
Your spirits shall be wedded there:
Waters are lost and fires will die,
But love alone can fate defy.

Enter ARANTHES *with the body of* VARANES.

Aran. Where is the empress? where shall I find Eudosia?
By fate I'm sent to tell that cruel beauty
She has robb'd the world of fame: her eyes have given
A blast to the big blossom of the war:

Behold him there nipp'd in his flow'ry morn,
Compell'd to break his promise of a day,
A day that conquest would have made her boast:
Behold her laurel wither'd to the root,
Canker'd and kill'd by Athenais' scorn.

Athen. Dead, dead, Varanes!

Theo. "Oh, ye eternal powers
"That guide the world! why do you shock our reason
"With acts like these, that lay our thoughts in dust?
"Forgive me, Heaven, this start, or elevate
"Imagination more, and make it nothing."
Alas, alas, Varanes! But speak, Aranthes,
The manner of his fate. "Groans choke my words—
"But speak, and we will answer thee with tears"

Aran. His fever would, no doubt, by this have done
What some few minutes past his sword perform'd.
He heard from me your progress to the temple,
How you design'd at midnight to deceive him
By a clandestine marriage: but my lord,
Had you beheld his racks at my relation,
Or had you empress seen him in those torments,
When from his dying eyes swol'n to the brim
The big round drops roll'd down his manly face,
When from his hollow'd breast a murm'ring crowd
Of groans rush'd forth, and echo'd all is well;
Then had you seen him, oh ye cruel gods!
Rush on the sword I held against his breast,
And dye it to the hilt with these last words——
Bear me to Athenais——

Athen. Give me way my lord;
I have most strictly kept my promise with you:

I am your bride, and you can ask no more:
Or if you did I 'm past the power to give—
But here, oh here! on his cold bloody breast
Thus let me breathe my last.

Theo. Oh, empress! what, what can this transport mean?
Are these our nuptials, these my promis'd joys?

Athen. Forgive me, sir, this last respect I pay
These sad remains—and oh, thou mighty spirit!
If yet thou art not mingled with the stars,
Look down and hear the wretched Athenais,
When thou shalt know before I gave consent
To this indecent marriage, I had taken
Into my veins a cold and deadly draught,
" Which soon would render me, alas! unfit
" For the warm joys of an imperial lover,
" And make me ever thine, yet keep my word
" With Theodosius," wilt thou not forgive me?

Theo. Poison'd, to free thee from the Emperor!
Oh, Athenais! thou has done a deed
That tears my heart! What have I done against thee
" That thou should'st brand me thus with infamy
" And everlasting shame? thou might'st have made
" Thy choice without this cruel act of death:
" I left thee to thy will, and in requital
" Thou hast murder'd all my fame."

Athen. Oh, pardon me!
I lay my dying body at your feet,
And beg, my lord, with my last sighs intreat you,
T' impute the fault, if 't is a fault, to love,

And the ingratitude of Athenais,
To her too cruel stars. Remember, too,
I begg'd you would not let me see the prince,
Presaging what has happen'd; yet my word
As to our nuptials was inviolable.

Theo. Ha! she is going!—"see her languishing eyes
"Draw in their beams!" the sleep of death is on her.

Athen. "Farewell, my lord." Alas, alas, Varanes!
T'embrace thee now is not immodesty,
Or if it were, I think my bleeding heart
Would make me criminal in death to clasp thee,
"Break all the tender niceties of honour
"To fold thee thus, and warm thee into life,
"For oh, what man like him could woman move!"
[illegible] prince belov'd! oh, spirit most divine!
Thus by my death I give thee all my love,
And seal my soul and body ever thine—— [*Dies.*

Theo. Oh, Marcian! oh, Pulcheria! did not the Power
Whom we adore plant all his thunderbolts
Against self-murd'rers, I would perish too;
But as I am I swear to leave the empire.
To thee, my sister, I bequeath the world,
And yet a gift more great, the gallant Marcian:
On then, my friend, now shew thy Roman spirit!
As to her sex fair Athenais was
Be thou of thine a pattern of true honour:
Thus we 'll atone for all the present crimes,
That yet it may be said in aftertimes,
No age with such examples could compare,
So great, so good, so virtuous, and so fair. [*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

THRICE happy they that never wrote before;
How pleas'd and bold they quit the safer shore!
Like some new captain of the city bands,
That with big looks in Finsbury commands,
Swell'd with huge ale he cries, Beat, beat the drum;
Pox o' the French king! Uds-bud! let him come;
Give me ten thousand red-coats and alloo!
We'll firk his Crequi and his Conde too.
Thus the young scribblers mankind's sense disdain,
For ignorance is sure to make 'em vain;
But far from vanity or dang'rous pride
Our cautious Poet courts you to his side;
For why should you be scorn'd, to whom are due
All the good days that ever authors knew?
If ever gay, 'tis you that make 'em fine;
The pit and boxes make the poet dine,
And he scarce drinks but of the critic's wine.
Old writers should not for vain-glory strive,
But like old mistresses think how to thrive;
Be fond of ev'ry thing their keepers say,
At least till they can live without a play;
Like one who knows the trade and has been bit,
She dotes and fawns upon her wealthy cit,
And swears she loves him merely for his wit.

Another, more untaught than a Walloon,
Antic and ugly, like an old baboon,
She swears is an accomplish'd beau-garçon;
Turns with all winds, and sails with all desires;
All hearts in city, town, and court, she fires,
Young callow lords, lean knights, and driv'ling squires.
She in resistless flatt'ry finds her ends,
Gives thanks for fools, and makes ye all her friends.
So should wise poets sooth an awkward age,
For they are prostitutes upon the stage.
To stand on [illegible]ts were foolish and ill-bred
As for a lady to be nice in bed;
Your wills alone must their performance measure,
And you may turn 'em ev'ry way for pleasure.

00043230

Digitized with financial assistance from

on 10 July, 2018